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v. 14, no. 8

# *The* HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN

Buy War Bonds and Stamps



COVER PICTURE

Thespians Shirley Cuthbert and Harry Magonias in *The Copperhead*, by Augustus Thomas, as presented by the Sages (Troupe No. 460) of Hughes High School, Cincinnati, Ohio. Directed by Erna Kruckemeyer.

VOL. XIV. No. 8

A National Publication Devoted To Dramatics in the Secondary Schools

35c Per Copy

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By KENNETH ROWE

★

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### ADDITIONAL SCHOOLS ENLISTED IN THE HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE FOR VICTORY PROGRAM

MAY, 1943



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# High School Dramatics in the Victory Corps

by KENNETH ROWE

Chairman, Committee on War Activities, American Educational Theatre Association, and  
Professor of English, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.

## Evaluation: General Background

THE war has brought re-examination and revaluation of every activity. There are both a war and a peace to be won, but the war must be won first. Displacement of liberal arts instruction for technical trainings of essential immediate utility for the conduct of the war is being widely advocated. Many teachers of liberal arts themselves are in agreement. By the nature of their training and interests, they were among the first to have insight into the necessity and meaning of this war for the preservation of humane values, and now no one desires more earnestly to do what will count most. Those especially in the fields of the creative arts are intensely aware of the significance of freedom. The reasons for the curtailment, or even elimination, of dramatics, as of other creative arts, from the programs of some high schools are obvious and in general public view. For a balanced approach to the problem of selection, some analysis and account of the functioning of dramatics in the war is needed.

Three weeks after the entrance of the United States into the war, the American Educational Theatre Association appointed a Committee on War Activities. The functioning of drama for the war in schools has been developed by the Committee on the following considerations:

1. Maintaining the established functions, dramatic production, training of teachers and workers of every kind for the theatre, and cultivation of free creative thought and expression of students, is a primary responsibility to the democracy for the continuance of which we are at war. The theatre as a composite and social art is a unique focus for the creativity and free culture which is the American way of life, and which must be sustained during the period in which so much thought and energy are of necessity directed towards destruction, if we are to win the peace as well as the war.

2. At the same time, in this war, drama has proved to be a direct war activity. The government, through the Special Service Division of the War Department, has recognized the value of drama to military morale, and has organized voluntary services through the National Theatre Conference to provide drama as entertainment and recreational activity for the Army. Drama has been utilized by government agencies for the prosecution of the war on the home front, and the contribution of high school, college, and community theatres have been recognized to the degree that an informal inter-agency committee has now been set up for coordination with the work of the non-commercial theatre organizations. Under the chairmanship of Emery W. Baldus, Head of the School and College Services Section of the OWI, this committee includes representatives from the Office of War Information, Office of Civilian Defense, War Production Board, Office of Education, Department of Agriculture, Office of Price Administration, Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, and the Treasury. Representation from several other agencies is expected. As a result of a conference of

"This is the draft of a chapter prepared in co-operation with the United States Office of Education for publication in a bulletin on 'The Communication Arts in the Victory Corps.' Other chapters will present suggestions for teachers in the following fields: Arts, English, graphic arts, journalism, music, radio, speech and visual education. Announcement of the bulletin, when officially approved, will appear in *Education For Victory*, official bi-monthly journal of the United States Office of Education when it becomes available from the Superintendent of Documents."—Dr. William D. Boutwell, United States Office of Education.

representatives of these agencies with representatives of the non-commercial theatre, held in Washington, March 11, 1943, upon invitation of the division of Educational Services of the OWI, an Amateur Theatre War Council representing six national non-commercial theatre groups, with four others to be invited, has been organized for coordination with the governmental committee.

3. This is an age of dramatized communication. People have become keyed to the attention-arresting effect of dramatic presentation, from the stage and on the air. Dramatization energizes the reception of facts and ideas with emotion, the impulse to action; in other words, adds morale value to information. The war has suddenly projected a vast field of subject matter urgently and speedily demanding the most effective means of communication. It has become increasingly evident that every school theatre, and every class in dramatics, for stage and radio, can be a significant unit in the job of communicating realization of what must be done for victory.

4. This is a war of communication. Winning a war in a democracy, if it remains a democracy, depends upon the free response of an informed people. Drama is one of the instruments to that end, and the field of directive and energizing communication is a supporting front, to be maintained on resources available outside the primary demands of military service with its technical adjuncts, and of industrial and food production. With the trained personnel of writers, actors, directors, and technicians being constantly reduced to meet these primary demands, every available contribution to the process of communication is needed.

5. Direction of a part of the training of students in dramatics toward winning the war in no way hinders, but vitalizes for the present stress, the regular creative function of drama courses. In making their contribution to the common cause, the students themselves gain in acquisition of information and in unity and direction of spirit.

6. The following major specific contributions to the war can be made by dramatics:

- a. Communication of war information, and support of war campaigns (for blood donation, buying of War Stamps and Bonds, and so on) by writing and production of special scripts, stage or radio.
- b. Cultivation of constructive attitudes for the war by production of patriotic programs, plays embodying themes such as freedom and democracy, and so on, both for stage and radio.

- c. Entertainment of men in the services.
- d. Raising money for war services by benefit performances.
- e. Giving purposiveness to the war by maintaining the realization of the meaning of freedom through creative activity, and developing a background from great drama of permanent cultural values.

## Special Values of Dramatics for the War in High Schools

1. Both for communication of war information, and for dissemination of constructive attitudes for the war, the high schools offer three distinctive values as areas for organization of dramatics for the war.

- a. Wide distribution, numerically, geographically, and of social backgrounds.
- b. Effectiveness as an influence in an entire community because of the interest of parents in the activities of their children, operating both in the audience, and in the home by association with the student's preparation of their work.

c. While the draft reaches into the high schools to some extent, the number available for dramatics of men as well as women remains as yet but slightly reduced as compared to colleges and community theatres.

2. A further advantage in the high school area is the eagerness of young people of high school age for activity, if their interest and conviction are engaged; their capacity for enthusiasm, and readiness to go "all-out."

3. There is special opportunity in high schools for emphasis on the post-war phase of the work, on values and problems for the future. Creating the post-war world is going to be the present high school students' job.

## Services Within the School

1. Communication of war information and support of war campaigns.

Produce short scripts embodying war information or stimulating response to the various war drives, on assembly programs, on the programs of special meetings for war purposes, and as curtain-raisers to plays on the regular dramatic program.

Such scripts can be obtained from sources listed in the bibliography which follows. So far as possible, however, the scripts produced by students for a student audience should be written by the students themselves. This is important. They will have far more interest and enthusiasm, and for the high school age the activity itself is of primary importance; they will acquire information in the process of research, and the information and purpose of the script will become integrated in their minds by the activity. A script is usually best done by a collaborating committee, both for the research and the actual writing; the product is likely to be better, and there is value to the students in meeting each other's minds on the material. Encourage the constructive approach of dramatization of people doing the right thing, as against satirical dramatization of people who are not doing what they should in the war.

2. Cultivation of constructive attitudes for the war.

Include plays on the regular dramatic program of American traditions and backgrounds, of the backgrounds of the United Nations, and embodying the basic ideas of freedom, democracy, and humanity. Do a patriotic pageant or festival on one of the United Nations, etc. Do one-act plays similarly selected on assembly programs. Max J. Herzberg, President, National Council of Teachers of English, reports that the project of a series of United Nations assembly programs is proving particularly effective in a number of high schools.

Suggestions for finding such plays and pageants appear in the bibliography. Some of the one-act plays, or a pageant, may be written by

the students themselves. Avoid the smug kind of patriotism; stress appreciative understanding of other peoples, and the ideas of cooperation and humanity. It would be desirable, for high school students, if every pageant or festival for the war could have a post-war ending.

### 3. Giving purposiveness to the war by developing a background of values.

a. *Inclusion of plays for production which do not have direct relation to the war, but which reveal the permanent truths and values of human living.* High school students too often are given farces, melodramas, or sentimental plays—or just mediocre plays—to produce. High school students are at the *philosophical* age, concerned with thinking out values for life, and at the *poetic* age. They are also at an active more than a reading age, by which they can be reached by great literature more readily by acting a great play than in any other way. Shakespeare should be studied in high school by giving his plays to the students to produce, yet the great plays are often deferred for production as being beyond high school dramatics. The production may be immature, but high school students can derive value for themselves from producing Shakespeare or Sophocles. Too often the idea of a serious play for high school is a sentimentally inspiring play. A society which had absorbed Shakespeare and Sophocles at an early age would have possessed a substantial knowledge of good and evil, lost from much modern literature, by which Nazism would have been recognized and throttled before it had grown.

b. *Encourage playwriting.* The creative arts, in which the individual examines, organizes, and molds life into form with the whole of his mind according to his own understanding, are the ultimate expression of freedom and a free society. In dramatics, the association of playwriting and production gives completely creative experience. Students should be encouraged to write about what is most familiar to them, which will give them an intensified awareness of life, and understanding of their own American background. There should be no dictation, however, but freedom to carry out their own ideas.

c. *In the development of a dramatic program of specific contributions for the war, stress extra-curricular work.* Part of the program can be integrated with the regular processes of training in dramatics, but not all. This is no time for loss of fundamental background values. High school students are capable of extra work for a cause.

### Services Outside the School

#### 1. Communication of war information and support of war campaigns.

Production of short scripts for war information and war drives are in demand for the programs of community meetings. Scripts for public meetings usually need to be stageable with no scenery and simple properties. For outside the school, unless an exceptionally good script has been written, it will be better to draw upon the scripts by more experienced writers, rather than on the students' writings. Teams of dramatics students for production of short scripts by engagement have been organized.

Pageants may be planned and put on under the organization of a high school dramatics department for public production for the community. In such a case, faculty and townspeople as well as students may well take part.

The basis of good organization for outside work is to consult first of all with the local Defense Council, and the Office of War Information if the community is large enough to have one; then with whatever other organizations, as the Chamber of Commerce, which may in your community be conducting war work. Organizations for specific activities, as the Red Cross, should be consulted.

#### 2. Entertainment of men in the services.

If there is a camp near, this may be a function on which to concentrate. Consult with the commanding officer and find out if he wants

dramatic service, and if so, what he wants. A production taken to a camp needs to be good. For some camps, lending of theatre equipment, or technical advice, for their own productions are the services most desired. Free or reduced admissions to service men to public dramatic productions, and arrangement of social gatherings with the service men following the performances are appreciated. For full information on camp entertainment service apply to Barclay S. Leatham, Executive Secretary, National Theatre Conference, Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio.

#### 3. Raising money for war services by benefit performances.

The functioning of benefit performances depends almost entirely upon local conditions. High schools have been particularly successful in this kind of contribution of dramatics to the war because of the wide contact and identification with the community.

### Tie-in with other Subjects and Activities

THE concepts of freedom and democracy are being concentrated upon in many courses in social studies, American history, and American literature. Coordination of dramatics with these courses can give ideas and material for dramatization to the playwriting students, and a great deal of interest can be added to those courses by the dramatics departments engaging with them in the production, or writing and production, of plays correlating with what is being studied. In the Drama Workshop, Paseo High School, Kansas City, Missouri, for example, presentation of an "Allied Nations Series" of one-act plays, Russian, Chinese, and English, was combined with study of not only the dramatic tendencies, but the dress, political theories, music, dance, history, and art of our allies in the war.

Music, dance, and dramatics classes will naturally be associated together for pageants. Wartime has special need of the kinds of production which combine these arts.

Dramatics students can apply their speech training and their research on war information and war drives to service as speakers for the school's Victory Corps Program, or other organizations calling for speakers on war topics.

### Tie-in with the Victory Corps

(Note: See U. S. Office of Education publication, *High School Victory Corps*.)

1. *Victory Corps Objectives.* Dramatics can provide especially effective training for No. 2, "Wartime Citizenship," and No. 8, "Community Services."

2. *Basis for General Membership in the Victory Corps.* Dramatics can meet No. 2, preparation for future usefulness to the Nation's war effort, as training for the communication services, in which shortages are already being reported; and No. 3, current participation in one of the wartime activities or services of the type listed: dramatics can contribute to any of the services listed by communicating information, stimulating support, or raising money.

3. *Division of the Victory Corps.* Dramatics can qualify students for the "Community Service Division" on the following:

- Preparation for a service occupation at the professional level.
- Preparation for a community service occupation to be entered upon leaving high school.
- Engagement in some form of part-time work, either paid or voluntary, in some form of community service.

"It is the honest conviction of the United

States Office of Education that the high school student engaged in classroom or extra-curricular theatrical activity can prove himself no less worthy of the Victory Corps insignia than is the chemist student or the student of trigonometry. The High School Theatre can help win the War."—The United States Office of Education.

### Recommended Procedures

1. The National Thespian Dramatic Society for High Schools, College Hill Station, Cincinnati, Ohio, has underway a comprehensive, well-thought-out, and well-organized "High School Theatre for Victory Program." The program is well-conceived in its details for appeal to high school students. The program cooperates with the Office of War Information, U. S. Office of Education, Office of Civilian Defense, and the Amateur Theatre War Council.

Ernest Bavely, Executive Secretary of the National Thespian Society, explains the program as follows: "The High School Theatre for Victory Program is designed to mobilize the nation's high school dramatics groups for more effective participation in wartime services. Participation in the program is open to ALL high school theatres, dramatics clubs and classes, radio clubs, and other play production units. Participation is on a voluntary and patriotic basis. There are no dues, fees, or other assessments. Projects sponsored as contributions to the Theatre For Victory Program are considered an integral part of the Victory Corps in those schools where units of the Corps have been established.

*Services of the Theatre for Victory program include:*

1. Compiles and maintains for the convenience of wartime agencies an up-to-date directory of the nation's high school dramatics groups active in the war program.

2. Cooperates with various agencies in the distribution of scripts and other materials bearing upon specific wartime problems, to the nation's high school dramatics groups.

3. Assists high school dramatics groups in the selection and production of worth while plays, pageants, and programs stimulating to the war program.

(A Wartime Play Reading Committee is now functioning. The Committee's first list of recommended wartime plays for secondary schools may be obtained free of charge from the National Thespian Society.)

4. Gives assistance to high school dramatics groups in the preparation and presentation of entertainment for the men in service. (With the cooperation of the National Theatre Conference.)

5. Assists high school dramatics groups in integrating their activities with other wartime activities of the school.

6. Provides a medium for the exchange of information among high school dramatics groups active in the war program. (News concerning all such wartime activities is published regularly in the national publication, *The High School Thespian*.)

7. Assists high school dramatics groups in maintaining a permanent record of all their projects sponsored in behalf of the war effort by a "Record Certificate" plan.

A number of high school dramatics groups have already enrolled in the High School Theatre for Victory Program. Other active groups should be enrolled at once. To enlist, address a postal card or letter to the National Thespian Society, College Hill Station.

(Continued on page 23)

THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN



## Additional Schools Enlisted as Contributors

TO THE

# HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE FOR VICTORY PROGRAM

★★★★★

Number of high school theatre groups previously enrolled and announced. 52

The small flag (🇺🇸) after the star (★) indicates that the group has performed in an army camp or base.

★Thespian Troupe No. 431, Rockland, Me., High School. Allston E. Smith, sponsor. Staged patriotic play, "Showdown at Sawtooth"; radio performances of "Time Is Short".

★Thespian Troupe No. 149, Paragold, Ark., High School. Mrs. W. J. Stone, sponsor. Contributed to the Stage Door Canteen Fund.

★Thespian Troupe No. 316, Van, W. Va., High School. Mellrose Higginbotham, sponsor. Contributed to the Stage Door Canteen Fund.

★Thespian Troupe No. 60, Boulder, Colo., Senior High School. Ted Skinner, sponsor. Staged patriotic play, "The American Way"; produced original patriotic program; presented assembly program inaugurating Victory Corps.

★Thespian Troupe No. 308, Darien Conn., High School. Elsa Petersson, sponsor. Contributed to Stage Door Canteen Fund.

★Thespian Troupe No. 47, Newton, Kansas, High School. A. E. Bilger, sponsor. Staged original patriotic show, "Voices For Victory"; contributed funds to Red Cross and U. S. O.

★Thespian Troupe No. 97, Herkimer, N. Y., High School. Ralph K. Alger, sponsor. Contributed to Stage Door Canteen Fund.

★Thespian Troupe No. 301 and Junior Class, Marked Tree, Ark., High School. Mrs. Marie Thost Pierce, sponsor. Staged patriotic plays.

★Thespian Troupe No. 91, Isaac C. Elston High School, Michigan City, Ind. Mellie Luck, sponsor. Contributed to U.S.O., Stage Door Canteen and staged patriotic play, "Mother Buys A Bond," before local organizations.

★Carver Thespians and Players, Carver High School, Winston Salem, N. C. Mrs. G. H. Fitch, sponsor. Produced patriotic program; contributed to Stage Door Canteen Fund.

★Thespian Troupe No. 137, Bramwell, W. Va., High School. Shirley Foster, sponsor. Sponsored "Silk Hose Drive"; participation in Red Cross Drive; contributed to the Stage Door Canteen Fund.

★Thespian Troupe No. 127, Salem, N. J., High School. Marie L. Oehrle, sponsor. Produced four patriotic programs; contributed to Stage Door Canteen Fund.

★Thespian Troupe No. 501, Salinas, Calif., Union High School. Harold H. Ulrici, sponsor. Staged patriotic pageant, "In Step With The Stars And Stripes"; produced patriotic play, "Lease On Liberty".

★🇺🇸 Thespian Troupe No. 161, Urbana, Ill., High School. Mrs. Ethel D. Hamilton, sponsor. Gave several performances at Chanute Field for the men in service; contributed to Stage Door Canteen Fund; staged many patriotic plays.

★Dramatics Club, Neptune High School, Ocean Grove, N. J. Colette O. Moser, director. Presented program at Asbury Park U. S. O. Center.

★Thespian Troupe No. 333, Burlington, Wash., High School. James J. Gilmore, sponsor. Presented program of one-act plays for Red Cross Benefit Fund.

★🇺🇸 Thespian Troupe No. 469, Wenatchee, Wash., High School. Grace Gorton, sponsor. Presented "The Patsy" for soldiers at Ephrata Air Base; contribution to the Stage Door Canteen Fund; produced patriotic plays for assembly.

★Thespian Troupe No. 549, Payson, Utah, High School. Arch Williams, sponsor. Staged patriotic pageant, "I Hear America Singing"; contribution to Stage Door Canteen.

★Thespian Troupe No. 212, Sherman High School, Seth, W. Va. Mrs. Mary W. Tampin, sponsor. Contributed to Stage Door Canteen Fund.

★Speech and Dramatics Club, Kendallville, Ind., High School. Eva L. Robertson, sponsor. Staged three one-act plays in behalf of war effort; produced five fifty-minute patriotic programs for school assembly; contributed to the Junior Red Cross and Stage Door Canteen Fund.

★Pierrot Troupe No. 254, B. M. C. Durfee High School, Fall River, Mass. Barbara Wellington, sponsor. Staged original pageant for the sale of war bonds.

★Thespian Troupe No. 355, Drew, Mass., High School. Jayne Styles, sponsor. Produced a bill of one-act plays with part of net proceeds contributed to the Stage Door Canteen Fund.

★🇺🇸 Thespian Troupe No. 108, Kenmore, N. Y., High School. Eve Strong, sponsor. (Continued on page 21)



Dramatics follows the colors. Induction of the Seton Players (Thespian Troupe No. 371) into the Victory Corps at the Seton High School, Cincinnati, Ohio. Directed by Sister Marie Palmyre.

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THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN



# Amateur Theatre Groups Organize for Wartime Services

CONSIDERABLE progress in mobilizing and coordinating the nation's non-profit theatre groups for wartime services was achieved through the organization of an "Amateur Theatre War Council" at a series of conferences held in Washington and New York on March 11, 12, and 13, attended by representatives from various non-profit theatre organizations and government agencies.

Upon invitation of the Division of Educational Services of the Office of War Information, the following persons met in Washington on March 11 for the purpose of conferring on ways and means whereby the resources of the non-profit theatres of the country might be employed for maximum service in the war program:

Ernest Bavely (The National Thespian Dramatic Society for High Schools)  
Dina Rees Evans (American Educational Theatre Association)  
Albert Johnson (American Communal Theatre)  
Frederick H. Koch (Carolina Playmakers)  
Barclay Leathem (National Theatre Conference)  
E. C. Mabie (University of Iowa)  
Alfardyce Nicoll (Yale University)  
Lee Norvelle (National Theatre Conference)  
Kenneth Rowe (American Educational Theatre Association)  
George Savage (American Educational Theatre Association)  
W. Hayes Yeager (George Washington University)  
Homer Anderson (Education Section of the Treasury Department)  
Walter Baerman (Office of Civilian Defense)  
Emery W. Balduf (Office of War Information)  
William D. Boutwell (Office of Education)  
Ben James (Department of Agriculture)  
Ronald R. Lowdermilk (Office of Education)  
John McGee (War Savings Staff of the Treasury Department)  
Alan Schneider (Office of War Information)  
Wilbur Schramm (Office of War Information)  
Marion White (Writer's War Board)  
Elizabeth Wilson (Women's Section of the Treasury Department)

The conference, directed by Emery W. Balduf of the OWI, resulted in the appointment of a Resolutions Committee consisting of Lee Norvelle, Albert Johnson, Dina Rees Evans, Ernest Bavely, John McGree, and E. C. Mabie as chairman. The Committee met immediately at the close of the general conference session and adopted the following resolutions:

I. The committee recommends that the war council of educational and community theatres (non-profit theatres) be organized with equal representation from the following groups\*:

1. The National Theatre Conference
2. The American Educational Theatre Association
3. The American Communal Theatre
4. The National High School Thespian Society
5. The Catholic amateur players
6. The Protestant church players
7. The Jewish amateur players
8. Labor organizations amateur players
9. The Negro players

\*(At the meeting on the following afternoon in New York it was voted to make temporary appointments of persons to represent these organizations at once and to ask that the organizations designate their permanent appointees by April 1.)

II. The committee recommends that cooperating government agencies be asked to designate one man in the Office of War Information through whom they may carry on arrangements with the new war council.

III. The committee recommends that the Federal Education War Council, of which Dr. Lyman Bryson is chairman, be requested to arrange for the employment of a person nominated by the war council and properly qualified to represent non-commercial theatre activities adequately within the organization of the Office of War Information.

IV. The committee recommends that arrangements be made to maintain a representative or a secretary of the war council in Washington and that an effort be made to secure funds for this purpose.

V. The committee recommends that the war council outline a broad work program for all of these organizations.

At a meeting held on the afternoon of March 12 at the Hotel Piccadilly in New York, the following recommendations were added:

VI. That this new war council for educational and community theatres join these organizations which are taking under consideration post-war problems and the problems of the peace.

VII. That the temporary committee appointed to bring about the organization of the war council continue to function until the organization is completed and made permanent, which will be about April 1st.

The resolutions were presented by Chairman Mabie at a second general conference session the next day at the Hotel Piccadilly, New York. Adoption of the resolutions was followed by the formation of a Temporary War Council with the following membership:

Prof. E. C. Mabie, chairman  
Kenneth Rowe, secretary (American Educational Theatre Association)  
Lee Norvelle (National Theatre Conference)  
Ernest Bavely (National Thespian Dramatic Society of High Schools)  
Helen Purcell (National Catholic Theatre Conference)  
Dick Campbell (Negro theatres)  
Albert Johnson (American Communal Theatre)

At a second meeting of the Temporary War Council held late in the afternoon of March 13, "Amateur Theatre War Council" was provisionally adopted as the official name for the Council. The Council drew and adopted the following "Functions of the War Council" and "Preliminary Work-program" for submission to the governing body of the organizations represented:

## Functions of the War Council

1. To serve as a medium of communication between the non-commercial theatre organizations and governmental and other war agencies.
2. To serve as a means for continuing organizations of ways in which the non-commercial theatre can contribute to the war, and ways in which government agencies can assist them to make such contribution.
3. To serve as a medium for enlistment by governmental or other war agencies of the combined action of the non-commercial theatre for a single war function as, a "Theatre for Victory Week," and a means of administering such a function.
4. To serve as a medium of exchange of ideas and information on war services between the member organizations.
5. To serve as a medium of communication for cooperation of the other organizations represented, when desired by a member organization in any war function pertaining to that organization.

"Preliminary Work-Program" for the War Council in Association with Government War Agencies

THE formation of the "Amateur Theatre War Council" described on this page is unquestionably a giant step forward in mobilizing the country's non-profit theatre groups for wartime services. Our only regret is that it was not established as soon as hostilities began. But no Council of this nature will adequately perform the services for which it is established without the prompt and generous cooperation of ALL the non-profit theatres. That cooperation must be expressed through vigorous action, rather than through words and mere affirmation of what the Council may propose to undertake in the way of a program. While the Council consists of representatives of certain groups organized on a national basis, we are certain that those who established it were more than anxious that all groups, regardless of size or composition, find for themselves a place in the Council's program where they may perform their most effective services in the war effort. The "Preliminary Work-Program" adopted by the Council is, admittedly, a big one; but this is a big war. The fullest measure of support is needed. Your first duty in this work is to make certain that your theatre, or organization of theatre groups represented by you, is mobilized and ready for action.—Ernest Bavely, Editor.

I. Writing and distribution of scripts relating to the war, including scripts for war information, of American background and traditions, of backgrounds of the United Nations, and on the values for which the war is being fought.

1. Organization and distribution of material for writing scripts.
2. Collection of scripts.
3. Preparation and distribution of classified script catalogues.
4. Answering of requests for scripts.
5. Preparation of a booklet on playwriting for the war.
6. Setting up classified mailing lists.
  - (a) For materials for scripts, and for script catalogues and scripts.
  - (b) For high school, college, community, and church theatre interests.
  - (c) For rural, small town, and city theatre interests.

II. Bibliographies of plays significant for the war, including:

1. American background and traditions.
2. Background of the United Nations.
3. Values for which the war is being fought.

III. Programs:

1. Preparation of a booklet on a work-program for a small community theatre season such as to engage community support, including plays which combine entertainment with theme or background of significance for the war, and war information and campaign scripts. Suggestions for tie-up of the theatre with War Bond and Stamps sales, raising Red Cross funds, etc., would be included.
2. Preparation of a program for the academic year of scripts for the war for colleges: scripts for nine productions, arranged in a logical sequence (as a script which generates feeling about the war followed as closely as possible by a script which projects what people can do), with a set of three scripts from which to select for each of the nine productions.
3. Programs organized similarly to that above for high school assemblies, churches, and labor groups.

IV. Investigation of means of maintaining theatre personnel that do not conflict with more essential services, as the possibility of enlisting for drama men returned on the Army and Navy rehabilitation program.

V. Contacts with state and regional theatre associations for exchange and channeling of services.

VI. Consultant service to government agencies on assigned script writing and distribution of scripts for the non-commercial theatre.

VII. A "Theatre for Victory Week" program.



Final scene from the Thespian initiation production of *The Thrice-Promised Bride* at the Arkadelphia, Ark., High School. Directed by Mrs. R. B. Thomas and Elizabeth Doane.

## Making Things Real

by MILDRED WIRT

Public Schools, Gary, Indiana

BECAUSE in Gary we have believed, for more than thirty years now, that personality is not a gift of the gods to the few, not something vague and ephemeral which one fortunately has, or unfortunately does not have, but is rather something objective and real—that can be developed in all people by the daily doing of significant tasks—we have had in each child's program a daily period which we call the Auditorium Period.

In our auditoriums in Gary we work with children of all ages, those in the first grade as well as those who are seniors in high school—with children of all types, normal, sub-normal, and superior—fortunate and unfortunate—with all nationalities and races—with but one aim, to develop integrated personalities that can live in and serve a Democratic Society.

We use all modes of expression: public speaking in all its forms; oral reading, both choral and individual; drama; and creative dramatics—because children need and can have experience in all of the speech arts. But no one mode of expression has made a greater contribution to our children than has Creative Dramatics.

### Objectivity

It, more than any other experience, probably because it makes its contribution through the visual, the auditory, and the kinaesthetic senses, helps to make *thinking objective*. Overcoming all physical handicaps of scenery, lighting, make-up, costuming, largely by ignoring them—children need little more than a room to shelter them, and a teacher—a good teacher who loves her art, knows the material and technique of that art, and understands children. If creative dramatics made no other contribution than this, that it demands objective thinking, it would merit a place in the

educational program of every school. Whenever children focus interest on a goal, on a task to be done, there is mental objectivity. Whenever a child places himself at the service of a group, he becomes objective and as he experiences the solving of difficulties, of problems, and of catastrophes—objectivity is achieved. So throughout all the process of dramatization, whether it be in choosing the scenes to be played, or in playing first one character and then another, or in the criticism or analysis that follows, specific, concrete *objective* thinking is demanded. If objective thinking is the greatest achievement in the development of the individual, then Creative Dramatics makes a contribution of the greatest value. I believe it does. Constantly, I hear teachers say, "Yes, he was not thinking very clearly, was he?" or "Yes, that was good thinking, wasn't it?" Creative Dramatics is *Thinking—Feeling—Being—in short, Creating*. The emphasis which once was placed on memory—didn't we use to hear "he forgot his lines?"—in this experience is placed entirely on *thinking*.

Children who dramatize make the ephemeral concrete—the angel, the Evil Spirit, the South Wind, the gnomes, elves, hobgoblins, Pan—all the abstract becomes concrete. Objective thinking is required whatever the material.

Adult citizens not in school work, in fact professional and business men in our Rotary Club, recognized this quality of objectivity in a creative dramatization of *And the Stars Heard* not long ago. At ten o'clock in the morning, the program chairman called, stating that their speaker had been unable to come and could some children give them something at 12:00. I had seen fifth and sixth grade mothers and fathers in their American home with their children and their small refugee guest, in a training room a day or two before. They went. They played their

story in which the Refugee Child speaks of the freedom he finds in America and the unity. He hears "America," "America the Beautiful" and a dozen other like songs sung in New York City, in Detroit, and in Gary, Indiana—played it on the diningroom floor in a bit of cleared space. The tributes paid, the message they projected, are tributes to objective thinking. One man, a former senator and a lawyer of ability, summed up all the appreciation when he said, "What we need is *less* preaching and more programs like this."

### Horizons—Viewpoints—Vision

I am constantly made aware, too, that children bring to us their present viewpoints and bring to the playing of any story their own experiences. I see a Gary, Indiana, mill-worker father in the master who minded the house and the house is a modern apartment—although the master as you know him worked in a field and his wife minded their cottage. But I also see those viewpoints enlarge as horizons broaden through the background which a teacher gives, the great variety of stories which she brings to the children, and the many, many characters one child can play. Out of enlarged viewpoints, widened horizons, objective thinking, a stirred imagination, comes Vision without which the personality is limited and one's service to society inhibited. Whether it be the man who makes a suit, the man who opens a butcher shop, or the artist who paints a picture—Vision, the power to look ahead in time and see the developed project rather than only the beginning of the task, is important. Children, as you know, see a unit before they begin to play it.

### Tolerance

Out of the understanding of people, the appreciation of different viewpoints, the respect one is forced to pay to both the work and the opinions of one's peers in any dramatic project—comes tolerance. One learns, too, through contact with good literature that characters may have some weakness with their strength, some strength in their weakness. Perhaps we may develop a sufficient number of men and women who may be able "to do the best we can with the material at hand when the peace comes." We may have a sufficient number of objective thinkers to say about ourselves, "We, too, may lack here and there a virtue."

### Correlation and Integration

From one's background, from one's interests comes both material and interpretation of material in this creative work. History, Science, Art, Music, all subject matter may offer material for dramatization. Last week I saw high school children dramatizing the story offered by Deems Taylor of the writing of the beloved carol, "Silent Night, Holy Night." You perhaps know the story of the Austrian minister who went up to the cabin in the Alps on



Christmas eve to call on the parents of a newly born baby. The cabin was made radiant by their happiness. Returning the minister, thinking of another birth which brought radiance to the world, wrote before morning the words of "Silent Night, Holy Night." His choir master before service time that morning wrote the music. Playing these experiences, the children added to their own learning and enriched the knowledge of those with whom they shared their play. The possibilities for correlation and integration are apparent. One might say the inevitability of integration can be seen!—in all fields of interest.

### Participation—Responsibility—Unity

A peculiar sense of oneness, of responsibility, each for each other, each for the whole, exists when all children participate in the dramatization, choose the scenes, play all parts, and criticize the whole. In this day of organization, union and non-union, in this day of working toward an integrated society, these may be important personality traits.

### Culture

Literature as it has been taught in the schools has made too little contribution to our culture. Not long ago I learned that a high school lad whose mother had taken him to see three of Shakespeare's plays went home with this question, "Mother, were there two men by the name of Shakespeare who wrote plays." The mother said "Why do you ask?" He replied, "Oh, we're studying a play in English written by a William Shakespeare but he certainly can't be the one who wrote the plays we saw!" Literature, creatively dramatized, becomes vital, real, and memorable.

### The Therapeutic Value

All our children, those who stutter, stammer, lisp, have creative dramatic experiences. You too, may have discovered that a boy who is a king, may speak without any difficulty at all while he is king because the king can have no speech difficulties! I have wondered whether by this method alone, we might not cure speech defects! Children with other problems, do solve their personal problems through playing out situations and problems very different from their own and those duplicating their own. Dr. Moreno, who has been working with problem children in New York City, has some very important data on the creative value of "playing oneself out of a given situation." This opens up new vistas of responsibility for the public school teacher who would cure her problem children as well as develop her normal children!

### Spontaneity

But the greatest value that lies in creative dramatics may be in its creativity or spontaneity. Dr. Moreno, at least, is sure that that quality alone may save man in his struggle against the Machine.

## FOR THE RECORD

Activities sponsored in behalf of the war effort by THE NATIONAL THESPIAN SOCIETY and THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN during the 1942-43 school year:

★ ★ ★ ★

**SEPTEMBER:** Urged the complete mobilization for wartime services of all high school dramatics groups affiliated with THE NATIONAL THESPIAN SOCIETY and those subscribing to THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN.

★ ★ ★ ★

**OCTOBER:** Distributed approximately 1,200 copies of the wartime scripts, *Junket For The Junkman*, and *Time Is Short*, to dramatics groups affiliated with THE NATIONAL THESPIAN SOCIETY. (Scripts furnished by Office of Civilian Defense.) Numerous productions reported throughout the country.

Opened nation-wide drive for contributions from high school dramatics groups to the Stage Door Canteen Fund.

★ ★ ★ ★

**NOVEMBER:** Distributed approximately 1,200 of the wartime scripts, *Hitler Has A Vision* and *The Left Jab*, to dramatics groups affiliated with THE NATIONAL THESPIAN SOCIETY. (Scripts furnished by Office of Civilian Defense.) Many productions reported.

★ ★ ★ ★

**DECEMBER:** Published article, "The High School Theatre in the Victory Corps," furnished by the United States Office of Education. Article reprinted and distributed by several leading play publishers to more than 20,000 high schools throughout the country.

Sponsored sectional meeting on "The Role of High School Dramatics in the Victory Corps" at the annual convention of the National Association of Teachers of Speech, Chicago, Ill.

★ ★ ★ ★

**JANUARY:** Launched the "High School Theatre For Victory Program," co-operating with the Office of War Information, United States Office of Education, Office of Civilian Defense, and other wartime agencies.

★ ★ ★ ★

**FEBRUARY:** Began drive to enlist high school dramatics groups as contributors to the "High School Theatre For Victory Program."

Encouraged organization of non-profit theatre groups for wartime services; proposed launching of "Theatre For Victory Program" for college, university, and community theatre groups.

Distributed 200 copies of wartime script on logging, *Woodman, Chop That Tree*, among New England high school dramatics groups. Copies furnished by War Production Board through the Office of War Information.

★ ★ ★ ★

**MARCH:** Sent delegate to conferences held in Washington and New York for the purpose of coordinating activities of non-profit theatre groups in behalf of the war effort. "Amateur Theatre War Council" formed, with THE NATIONAL THESPIAN SOCIETY representing the high school theatre groups.

Established "Wartime Play Reading Committee" for the purpose of evaluating war time plays offered high school dramatics groups. First list of plays recommended by Committee distributed to Thespian schools.

Began survey to ascertain ability of high school dramatics groups to provide entertainment to servicemen in camps and bases. (This survey sponsored with the cooperation of the National Theatre Conference.)

Thespian facilities accepted by the War Activities Committee of the American Educational Theatre Association for distributing A. E. T. A. wartime scripts to high school dramatics groups.

★ ★ ★ ★

**APRIL:** Distributed "Summary and Analysis of Food Script" to all directors affiliated with THE NATIONAL THESPIAN SOCIETY. Urged high schools to produce food show as major spring contribution to the war effort. Nation-wide drive for funds for Stage Door Canteen Fund resulted in contributions totaling \$2,875.07 as of April 15, 1943.

★ ★ ★ ★

**MAY:** Preparation undertaken for the enlistment, during fall of 1943, of all high school dramatics groups as contributors to the "High School Theatre For Victory Program," co-operating with the United States Office of Education and other government wartime agencies.

# "The Emperor Jones" and "Winterset"

The Seventh and last in a series of articles on Great Plays of All Times

(Primarily for Students)

by BERNARD HEWITT

Chairman, Dramatics Committee, Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, N. Y.

JONES. . . . Lawd Jesus, heah my prayer! I'se a po' sinner! a po' sinner! I knows I done wrong, I knows it! When I cotches Jeff cheatin' wid loaded dice my anger overcomes me and I kills him dead! Lawd, I done wrong! When dat guard hits me wid de whip, my anger overcomes me and I kills him dead. Lawd, I done wrong! And down heah whar dese fool bush niggers raise me up to de seat o' de mighty, I steals all I could grab. Lawd, I done wrong! I knows it! I'se sorry! Forgive me, Lawd—*The Emperor Jones*, Scene V. (Copyright, Horace Liveright).

## The Emperor Jones

THE production of *The Emperor Jones* in the cramped little theatre at 139 Macdougall Street, New York City, in November, 1920, is a milestone in the history of the American theatre. The Provincetown Players had begun work in a very modest way at the Wharf Theatre in Provincetown, Massachusetts, in 1915, had moved to New York in November of the next year, and had been quietly producing mostly bills of one-act plays for four years to a small audience of theatre enthusiasts. They had produced Eugene O'Neill's one-act plays as they came along. O'Neill had already achieved some recognition; *Beyond the Horizon* had been produced on Broadway the year before and had won the Pulitzer Prize. But neither O'Neill nor the players had had a popular success. *The Emperor Jones* was not a play likely to be given a hearing in the professional theatre. It was less than full-length and it required elaborate exterior scenery. When George Cram Cook, leading spirit of the Players, read the script he decided that the time had come to build a plaster sky dome on the little stage. There was just three hundred and sixty dollars in the treasury. The Players pitched in, carted water and plaster, and mixed concrete. In a short time the Players had the only plaster sky dome in New York, and a balance of \$6.40 in the treasury. The first performance went off well, but no one anticipated what was to come. The reviewers threw their caps over the fence, and the next morning the box office, which had never known a line before, had a queue stretching all the way to Washington Square. Admission was by subscription, and in the first week the Players enrolled over a thousand new subscribers. Popular success had come to the Players and to O'Neill.

There can be no doubt that the success was deserved. Charles Gilpin, the negro actor, played Jones magnificently, and the Players provided a fine all-round production. Although O'Neill has since written more complex and more subtle plays, he has written none more powerful in its dramatic impact. In outline *The Emperor Jones* is extremely simple. On an island in the West Indies, Jones, a negro escaped from a chain gang in America, has risen by guile and force of character

to be "Emperor" of the natives. He is bleeding them with "taxes" and salting the money away in a foreign bank against the day when they will rebel against him. The play opens on the afternoon of the day of reckoning. The natives have all fled to the hills, leaving Jones asleep in his "palace." Smitty, a cowardly, envious, cockney trader, wakes him up for the pleasure of telling him the news. Although the crisis has come six months earlier than he had expected, Jones is prepared. He has planned his route to the sea, and he has hidden food on the edge of the jungle. Laughing at Smitty's spiteful warnings, he starts off jauntily in his gaudy uniform, stylish boots, and expensive panama hat. In his belt is a pearl-handled revolver, loaded with five lead bullets and one silver bullet, which he had had made when he had convinced the natives that only a silver bullet could kill him. The native drums have begun to sound from the hills.

He reached the edge of the jungle, tired, footsore, and hungry. He can't find his food, and while in a panic he searches for it, darkness falls. The little Nameless Fears advance on him out of the jungle. He wastes the first of his bullets on them and plunges into the jungle. In the next scene, he encounters the shade of a negro he had killed in the States, and fires again. He finds himself back in the chain gang, forced to re-enact his attack on the guard. The next scene takes him back of his own experience into the experience of his race. He finds himself on the auction block and fires to dispel the vision of buyers and sellers. Plunging on through the jungle, he stops to join a group of ghostly prisoners in the hold of a slave ship. Finally, he comes upon a rude altar near the bank of a jungle-choked river. A witch doctor dances. A great crocodile rises from the river and the witch doctor urges Jones towards its gaping jaws. He breaks the spell with his last bullet, the silver one. All through these jungle scenes, the native drums are heard growing faster and louder. Jones flight grows more and more frantic. His imperial finery is torn from him by the underbrush or cast aside as a hindrance, so that in the witch doctor scene he is almost naked.

The last scene takes place the next morning on the edge of the jungle where Jones had started his nightmare journey. The natives, who have spent the night moulding silver bullets, and Smitty, scornful but curious, are waiting. A sound is heard in the jungle, the natives slip away, shots are heard, and a few moments later the body of Jones is carried in. He had

run in a circle, and he has returned to die by a silver bullet.

*The Emperor Jones* is unusual in several ways. The first and last scenes form a kind of frame of everyday reality, setting off the intervening six scenes of Jones' nightmare of fear. In the second place, with the exception of the first and last scenes, the play is a monologue by Jones. In the six scenes of his terror, no one else speaks. Perhaps to balance this, the play depends greatly upon visual expression: Jones' pantomime, the visions that appear to him, and the forest itself, which changes so much in appearance that it is almost a character in the drama.

The commentators tend to dismiss *The Emperor Jones* with qualified praise, as theatrically effective, but shallow and obvious, a tremendously exciting psychological study of fear, but no more. Such an appraisal misses a deeper significance in the play. Jones belongs to the category of "tragic" characters. He is not a bad man; he is a man of energy and strong will, who has accepted a mistaken notion of how to rise in the world. With trickery and force he has become "Emperor," and although he says his imperial trappings are only to impress the ignorant "bush niggers," he is proud of his success and confident that he can hold what he has seized. But fear grips him and strips him of all his imperial splendor and every vestige of pride. It plunges him down and down, until naked and abject he is far below even the "bush niggers" whom he has despised and exploited. His is the tragedy of a man who rises unscrupulously to power and wealth, only to find that his cleverness and energy cannot help him aloft.

## Winterset

MIRIAMNE. Let me put my arms around you, Mio. Then if anything comes, it's for me, too. (She puts her arms around him.)

MIO. Only suppose this circle's charmed! To be safe until he steps from this lighted space into the dark! Time pauses here and high eternity grows in one quarter-hour in which to live.

MIRIAMNE. Let me see if anyone's there — there in the shadows.

MIO. It might blast our eternity — blow it to bits. No, don't go. This is forever, here where we stand.

—*Winterset*, Act III, (Copyright, Anderson House)

*Winterset* is generally considered to be Maxwell Anderson's finest play. When it was first produced by Guthrie McClintic in 1935, it won instant applause from the critics (who at the end of the season gave it their award) and instant popularity with the theatre-going public. Burgess Meredith's performance as Mio won him recognition as perhaps the most promising young actor on our stage. Made into a moving picture, *Winterset* won a wider audience and further laurels.

The original tide of acclaim was followed, however, by a backwash of soberer second thought. Commentators have since pointed out that the play is worthy, that the deaths of Mio and of Miriamne are not inevitable (a judgment which the moving picture version seems to substantiate), that the ideas in the play are mud-



dled, etc. The discovery that *Winterset* is not perfect has produced a somewhat exaggerated reaction against it. There is some truth, nevertheless, in most of the adverse criticism. The verse in which most of the play is written is sometimes watery and some times static. Mio twice refuses chances to save himself, but it must be remembered that he can save himself only at the expense of Miriamne's brother. The playwright assumes that Mio is seeking revenge. Actually, although he is motivated by hate and a vengeful spirit, what he seeks is simple justice. The lack of logic in the thought and of inevitability in the action probably springs from the fact that Judge Gaunt, not Mio, should have been the hero of a play on this theme. Many passages, especially the *Romeo and Juliet* conclusion, suggest a comparison with Shakespeare, a comparison which the play as a whole cannot stand.

But granting all that can be said against *Winterset*, it still remains a remarkable achievement. As Maxwell Anderson points out in the preface, he attempted in *Winterset* something that none of the great masters had attempted. He tried to make tragic poetry out of the stuff of his own time. Earlier he had treated the Sacco-Vanzetti case realistically in a prose drama. Now he was impelled to treat it again, not in realistic prose dialogue but in poetry, which alone permits, Anderson believes, the majesty of tragic expression. When *Winterset* was produced, the Sacco-Vanzetti case was no longer in the headlines, but it was still fresh in the minds of the audience. To have taken such material and to have fashioned it into a play, which, whatever its faults may be on paper, held audiences enthralled in the theatre, is an accomplishment of which any playwright may well be proud.

The tragic effect of *Winterset* arises largely out of the suffering and enlightenment of Mio. When Mio was a child, his father had been executed for a crime of which he was innocent, Homeless, and cursed with hatred for a society which permits such injustice, the boy has roamed the country searching for evidence which will clear his father's name. When he finds the evidence, he finds that he cannot use it without incriminating the brother of the girl with whom he has fallen in love. His love for Miriamne teaches him the sterility of hatred, and he goes to his death from the gangster's bullet with a new vision of what life can be. Such is the traditional and perhaps the inescapable pattern of tragedy, as Anderson has himself reminded us in his essay, *The Essence of Tragedy*. The hero of tragedy is blinded by some passion to the necessary laws of life, and through his blindness involves himself in action which leads to his destruction. At the same time the veil is lifted from his eyes, so that he dies a wiser and a better man. The defects of *Winterset* spring from the fact that there is nothing inevitable about Mio's falling in love with Miriamne. The

## CURTAIN FOR THE 1942-43 SEASON

WITH this issue we bring to a close the 1942-43 edition of THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN. Barring the unforeseen, we shall resume our publication schedule for the 1943-44 season with the October number in the fall.

We began the current season under certain anxieties concerning the effects of the war upon dramatics. The question of "status" bothered us. What place would dramatics have in the wartime program of the schools? How would the loss of teachers to wartime services affect the maintenance of dramatics organizations within the schools? And what effect would the loss of boys to the armed services and to industry have upon play production programs?

The answers to these questions began to take form as the year progressed. Although here and there certain school administrators let it be known that dramatics had no place in their "all-out" efforts, the United States Office of Education spoke otherwise: "Whether curricular or extra-curricular, an active high school dramatics program very definitely fits the two wartime objectives fostered and promoted by the Victory Corps." As for the loss of teaching personnel, a number of valuable dramatics directors gradually went into the services and into industry, and the process still continues. But their places, in most instances, were filled by equally competent persons, most of whom have shown just as much enthusiasm and devotion to dramatics as did their predecessors.

It is somewhat too early to say definitely what effects the loss of boys will have upon play production programs. The many calls this spring for plays with "few male parts" indicates that this loss is being felt. Even more serious perhaps is the loss of boys and girls who have employment for after-school hours. Yet there seems to be no appreciable loss of interest for dramatic activities in the schools where the program is in the hands of competent teachers and directors who understand and appreciate the role of dramatics in wartime.

Two notable developments of this spring again focus attention to the services dramatics can render the national effort. First is the formation of an "Amateur Theatre War Council" described elsewhere in this issue. Second is the conference called early in April by the United States Office of Education to consider the role of the "communication arts in the Victory Corps. The publication of the volume, *The Creative Arts in the Victory Corps*, will undoubtedly broaden the scope of contributions dramatics will make to the war program.

We shall soon plan our publication program for next season. We shall welcome your constructive suggestions and comments. If you have valuable data on any phase of dramatic work in the war effort, we shall welcome your contribution for publication in these pages. Above everything else, if your subscription expires with this issue, see that it is renewed in time for the October number. In closing, we wish to thank all who have supported our cause this season. In that large group of friends we include our subscribers, the always-cooperative play publishers, the editorial staff, and our Thespian Troupe Sponsors to whom goes the greater part of the credit for whatever success has come our way this year.—Ernest Bavely, Editor.

playwright has stacked the cards against Mio. Hence there is nothing inevitable either about the enlightenment which comes out of that love.

In the theatre, however, the play's logical weakness is largely obscured by the strength of the emotions which it arouses. The catastrophe may not be logically inevitable, but Anderson creates a tremen-

dously strong feeling of its inevitability. And in the end, whether it is logical or illogical, he creates that catharsis of the emotions, which we all recognize as the hall mark of tragedy. If Anderson's work suffers sometimes by comparison with Shakespeare, this is not always the case. Perhaps the most stirring scene in *Winterset* is that in the Esdras cellar apartment, when Mio learns the truth. There are gathered together a strange crew: Mio half mad for revenge, Miriamne, her fearful brother, Trock, the murderer, a stupefied hobo, and the partly crazed Judge Gaunt. The characters, the grotesque trial with Gaunt presiding as if he were in the courtroom, the storm raging outside, all suggest comparison with the scene in *King Lear* in the hut on the heath, when Lear tries his daughters for ingratitude. Anderson's scene does not lose by such comparison. In dramatic imagination, in the depths of pity and horror which it plumbs, it can stand beside Shakespeare's great scene.

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# Selling Dramatics to Our School and Community

by LILLIAN MASTERS

Director Children's Theatre, Terre Haute, Indiana

WHY should there be a need to sell dramatics to our schools and communities? We directors, and our young players, find it hard to conceive that our school and the public must be sold on the idea of good plays. Unfortunately, we who love the theatre, and we who feel that we are giving something worth while to our school and community, cannot realize that all others are not as steeped in this business of play production as we are. But the truth is there. Students and townspeople will not turn out for our plays unless we peddle our wares and convince them that what we have to offer is primarily for their entertainment and cultural advantage. We do have a following of interested play-goers but they need to be reminded. Our town, too, is a busy one and we must compete with all kinds of concert series, art exhibits and the usual entertainment activities.

The sum and substance of the situation is that we must offer the best in theatre to attract, first, those students who ordinarily prefer dancing, "coking," or other school activities; second, those uninterested townspeople who will not bother to attend unless the production is outstanding; and third, those interested but busy persons who would put other things aside and make the effort to attend if the play is worth while.

This year we gritted our teeth and planned a season which challenged any playbill as to what was the best in drama. Ten plays, including *The Eve of St. Mark*, *Ladies In Retirement*, *Arsenic and Old Lace*, *On Borrowed Time*, *Papa Is All*, *Out of the Frying Pan*, the new musical *Hayfoot Strawfoot*, and several others were chosen. The list was highly publicized. The great number of productions for the season, coming almost on each other's heels, and the variety of drama which the list represented, was bound to awaken something, we felt, and it did, for more season tickets were sold this year than ever before.

Probably the enthusiasm of our players group did much to sell this season. We have found that if the players recognize the merit of good plays, and they do every time, they unconsciously sell the season to outsiders through their own enthusiasm.

However, planning and executing such a terrific season of plays is a killing job for a director, and difficult for the already busy players. Now the problem is, how can we produce three or four good plays instead of ten during a season, and hold and even increase our following? The man actor shortage will limit more than we realize now our selection of best plays

for another season. Nevertheless, we have decided on a certain formula for selling our plays to the school and community which should work for us as well in war times as in normal times. It involves simply this:

1. Select the season's plays with great care and planning. Only the tested best will do.
2. Design and execute the setting with authenticity for every detail. There are no substitutes for the right thing.
3. Choose the best cast possible, with an absolutely impersonal approach. (If you can interest varied types of students in trying out for parts, athletes, music majors, etc., the general interest in school dramatics is more widespread.) Rehearse this cast to perfection.
4. Avoid any careless or amateurish touches in any phase of the production and in the details of the performance.

These few rules cover a great deal, but in general the idea is that good theatre will bring the recognition from school and community that no amount of flagrant advertising or ballyhoo could possibly bring.

On the other hand, selling our Children's Theatre to the schools and community was not a difficult task after the organization was perfected. First, the try-outs for casting the plays were opened to every child in the 32 city schools, to the parochial schools, and even to the county schools. As far as possible, we attempted to make the cast representative of these various schools. One child from each school in the current cast developed an interest for the entire school in the play. We opened the technical staff to youngsters, we chose our ushers and ticket takers from the various schools, we selected school orchestras, a different one for each performance, from the various schools, and we had the art classes in the various schools try their hands at posters and costume designs for the plays. Finally, at the actual performance, we tried to make the children in the audience feel that they too had an actual connection with the play by being a good watcher and a good

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listener. The result was that there was a tremendous number of children who felt that they had some part in putting on the show whether as an actor, stage hand, usher, or musician or audience.

The same theory concerning the best in plays applied to our Children's Theatre seasons just as it does to our older dramatic group. We began with the classic fascinators, *Treasure Island*, *Aladdin*, *Snowwhite*, *Ali Baba*, and *Rip Van Winkle*, and gradually came to the point where a season could include the more educational but equally entertaining classics such as *Peter Pan*, *Master Skylark*, *Robin Hood*, and even some simplified Shakespeare. Now Children's Theatre performances are announced, not advertised, through the regular school channels, and the superintendent of city schools permits any child who holds a ticket to be excused from school for the regular matinees. That has resulted in our playing to child audiences of from 700 to 1000 for each of the three matinees. We found that the child audience is a critical one, so our attention on details of scenery, costume, lights, sound and make-up has been as painstaking as it has been for those plays designed for adult audiences. For example, the make-up for Ben Jonson and William Shakespeare in the production of *Master Skylark* was studied and worked out from pictures because we knew these children would accept them only if they were right.

In general, our formula for Children's Theatre takes on much the same principle as that for the school theatre. First, the play itself must be definitely worth while; secondly, the stagecraft of the production must be right; and thirdly, the production must be, as a whole, staged and acted with an excellence that draws appreciation from the child mind. The one added factor concerning Children's Theatre is that the child should be made to feel that he has participated in some phase of the production or has some part in making the performance a success.

If one could draw a conclusion as to the selling of dramatics to school and community, the one most applicable at least in our situation, is PRESENT THE BEST PLAY POSSIBLE. Then, have the play well acted and correctly staged. Avoid cheap publicity. Depend on the merit of your production to secure your following.

## Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

SECTION 7 of Public Law 829 as amended by the 77th Congress reads as follows: "That the pledge of allegiance to the flag, 'I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all,' be rendered by standing with the right hand over the heart. However, civilians will always show full respect to the flag when the pledge is given by merely standing at attention, men removing the headdress. Persons in uniform shall render the military salute."



# The Curtain Rises

(For Students)

by ERNA KRUCKEMEYER

Director of Dramatics and Thespian Troupe Sponsor, Hughes High School, Cincinnati, Ohio

## The Overture

AT LAST the great moment has arrived, the moment that you have been looking forward to for weeks, the night of your first high school play. The stage hands have finished their job; the light man is at the switchboard; the production manager has checked set, properties, lights, bells, everything. The make-up people and costume mistresses view their work critically as the cast stands in the wings at their proper entrances awaiting the director's signal. The orchestra is just finishing the overture. Suddenly it rises to a crashing climax and the final chords are struck.

"Houselights."

And then the word that takes away your breath.

"Curtain"—and the play is on.

## The Curtain Is Up

For a moment all is quiet because in every well-managed show, the spectator is given time to take in the scene, to transfer himself in mind and spirit to the time and the place of the play, before there is any action or dialogue on the stage. After the moment of grace, however, it is "do or die" for the actor, and usually, all conscientious young Thespians rise to the occasion and "do." At first, no doubt, their voices are a bit faint and shaky. But as the play proceeds and they hear "that lovely sound out there," that murmur of pleasure in the audience so de-

lightful and inspiring to those behind the footlights that Terry, the heroine in *Stage Door*, speaks of, they gain confidence and feel the thrill that really comes "once in a lifetime"—the thrill of having, for the first time, a part in a worthwhile play.

## Looking Back to the Beginning

The process of producing a play is a long one. It takes vision, patience, intelligence, and human understanding on the part of the director. Perhaps you know better than I do what demands it makes on the actors. As I observe my young people, I can see that, first of all, it takes an overwhelming desire to be in the play, for they have been told that a good play takes time. To them,—I mean to you—it means planning ahead on dates and other activities. Indeed it may even require that you give up some of these. In addition, it takes willingness to cooperate. For Mary will, no doubt, learn her lines before John, or vice versa; and if you have ever been in a play, you know that there is no real progress until all the actors are able to put aside the book. Even then, as I warned you before, learning lines indicates only elementary progress. For after you have your lines letter perfect, and know your cues, after you have carefully planned your general movements and business, you have really just started in this fascinating business of play production.

Usually we practice quite a time without scenery and often without the regular properties. It is necessary, however, from the start to be familiar with the set. We always start out with a diagram of the stage set when we read the play over for the first time after it has been cast. With this we can sketch out the action as we proceed. To do this it is necessary to know just where each chair is,—each door,—the stair,—the desk or whatever is required for the action. This is particularly true because one of the first considerations in mapping out the necessary action is to keep in mind the stage picture. This must always be maintained not only for balance and beauty, but for dramatic effect, and not only at the rise and fall of the curtain, but *throughout the whole play*. This necessitates careful planning, exact distances, definite movements, always keeping in mind that movement and grouping must not only be balanced, but must be motivated.

## The Polishing Process

Although the subject of this paper is "The Curtain Rises," its object is to discuss the most delightful part of play production after the drudgery of lines, thinking out appropriate business, etc., have been accomplished. You have arrived at the polishing state and now suddenly, because you are thoroughly familiar with the lines, because in a way, they have become a part of you, they seem your words and you suddenly understand just what they mean. Almost unconsciously now your movements and bits of personal business become the natural accompaniment of those words. Not only that but new flashes of insight and understanding keep coming. In



Scene from Act II of *Suspense* as produced by Thespian Troupe No. 187 at the Brownsville, Pa., Senior High School. The play was directed by Miss Jean A. Donahy.

other words, things have begun to click, as we say, and the play which at times—even in the rehearsal just yesterday—seemed dull and forced, suddenly begins to come to life.

Now one of the most important phases in this polishing process is this skillful combination of personal business and dialogue “suited the action to the word” as Shakespeare puts it. As a general thing it just gradually develops with understanding and practice, but once in a while certain lines continue to seem meaningless and difficult to cope with. We had an example of this in our latest play, *The Copperhead*, by Augustus Thomas. Colonel Hardy, an old soldier, seventy-six years of age, was leaving when Mrs. Manning, a middle aged woman, also visiting at the same place, suggests that she accompany him to town. They leave and Philip Manning, the young lover remains behind with his sweetheart. As the old folks leave Philip has this line, “There’s no school like the old school.” “Why talk about the old school?” we asked ourselves. The line seemed entirely irrelevant. We were on the point of cutting it when the idea came. In a flash we saw that it suggested a delightful bit of business, that it was really a valuable stage direction. So thereafter, the old soldier who was standing at the gate, raised his hat, crossed to the lady and with a courtly bow offered her his arm. Then the two crossed to the gate again, she on his arm and smiling at him. And as they passed on, Philip’s line took on new meaning and the gallant old colonel had been given a charming bit of business. It is this kind of thing that makes those final rehearsals so interesting, for by this time you have gotten the spirit of the play so thoroughly that you have become the person you are portraying, and, consequently, you seem to understand just how that person would talk and what he would do. When we reach this stage, and ideas seem to come thick and fast, I am always reminded of what I heard Hugh Walpole, the well-known English novelist say. He was talking about how he worked and he said when he had once gotten the situation in hand and was thoroughly acquainted with his characters they just came crowding in on him talking so fast that he could hardly take down all they said.

## Tempo

Next in importance to the skillful tying up of business and dialogue, is the matter of tempo. *One of the things that stamps a production as amateurish more than any other single thing is the lack of correct timing.* On the other hand, when a play gives a feeling of finish—that is, produces a complete illusion—it is usually due, other things being equal, to the fact that careful attention has been given to the matter of tempo. It is also true that

one of the principal weaknesses in amateur play production, is that the play as a whole does not move quickly enough. To avoid this entrances should be prompt, cues should be picked up quickly and all action, walking in particular, should be brisk unless the nature of the scene forbids it.

Moreover, whenever possible, tempo should be *varied*. Again I shall try to illustrate from our play, *The Copperhead*. In the last act we had two effective exits, both old men. The first, Lem Tollard, was caught red-handed with a gun in his hand; attempting to shoot Milt Shanks, the central figure in the play. He was ordered out. He got up slowly, and slouched out looking leeringly around at the people who stood motionless and speechless, watching his exit. A moment later another old man had to leave. He was a hot-tempered old soul and as he walked out he began hurling epithets at Milton Shanks,—“Damned old jail bird, horse thief, fire brand, copperhead! Once a copperhead, always a copperhead!” He walked with a cane and to make his exit a complete contrast to that of Lem Tollard, we had him stamp out quickly shouting his accusations as he went. A fast exit was permissible for a second reason—i. e., it was entirely in keeping with a man of such a hot temper. The other fellow was a sneak; so his exit, too, was in character. Finally, remember the audience *must* be given something interesting to observe or think about every second of the time. This does not mean that there must be action or dialogue continuously. A pause may be intensely dramatic if there is thought behind it. One of the best examples of this is *Mice or Men*, where one of the men has taken out the old man’s dog to shoot him in order to put the animal out of his misery. The heart-broken old master and three other men are left on the stage, breathless and motionless waiting for the shot. The audience will wait with them, just as breathless and as motionless, if it is done well. Again in *Little Women*. The scene is the March livingroom. A door leads into an adjoining room where Beth lies dying. John Brooke enters and begins to ascend the stairs. Suddenly the door of Beth’s room opens. John stops short. Jo comes out of the room and looks at John. Before she speaks there is a pause that is more eloquent than any words could be. These beautiful moments in a play can be achieved only when you actors have grasped the spirit of the play and are really living your parts.

## Rhythm

Tempo, or timing, however, should not be confused with rhythm, although it is a part of this larger and most complex quality in play production. Rhythm is one of the most difficult things to explain. Someone attempting to define it in art and taking the famous Blue Boy as an example pointed out that in that picture, blue is the dominating color, but it varies an infinite number of times. Each time the change is clear cut and almost imperceptible. The critic shows how this fact progressively stimulates the attention of the spectator and arouses his curiosity to look at that which is not blue—the pale refined yellowish face of the Blue Boy. In a play, rhythm, in a general way, is the movement of the play, not in the sense of physical action only, but a movement which includes pauses in action and speech, lights, backstage effects, in fact every thing that is a part of stage production. It is the stop and go, the waves or changes caused by regularly recurring emphases now on this element now on that which produces a series of climaxes and makes the whole production move forward, creating the proper mood and bringing to life the scene as the author conceived. To illustrate let us take the last moments of Act I, of *The Copperhead*. Joey, the sixteen year old son of Milt Shanks, feeling disgraced because his father refuses to join the colors, is marching away with the local regiment. Sue, his fourteen year old sweetheart rushes in, telling the news—from a distance came the strains of the village band playing “Johnny Comes Marching Home.” Grandma comes out waiving her apron and crying out “We’re coming, Father Abraham.” Then Ma Shanks, Joey’s mother, appears and discovers what has happened. “Dear God!” she moans and takes her stand at the gate. The music goes on and Joey’s mother breaks down. Grandma exhorts her to be brave. Then Joey comes and throws his arms around his mother. His father makes a slight movement in his direction and then turns aside in heart-broken fashion. At last little Sue, realizing that Joey is gone, bursts into tears as the band continues to play, getting fainter all the time, and all the characters described above, each in his particular position, each having in turn been emphasized and so having formed a climax in the scene,—hold these positions as the curtain goes down. Each of the details described above, if worked out properly, and made to click, will constitute what we might call the rhythm of this scene.

## Conclusion

In closing, I want to say that producing a play, particularly polishing a play for production, always reminds me of the story of Pygmalion and Galatea. The former was a sculptor who fashioned an image of the lovely nymph, Galatea. The

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# A Sense of Perfection

(For Students)

by FRED C. BLANCHARD

Director of Dramatics, Woodrow Wilson Junior College, Chicago, Ill.

HERE we are on the final article of the series. You have read the title. The subject seemed so important to me that I thought it deserved separate treatment and placing at the end of the series. Yet now that I am at my typewriter, I am not even sure that the title is the correct one for what I want to say. Furthermore, it is not easy to give words to a belief developed by long experience. I am sure you will sympathize with me in my predicament. I know that you have strong convictions on some subjects, but have never tried to state them or explain them. Now that that is said, let's take a deep breath and dive right into the middle of the discussion of "A Sense of Perfection Through Dramatics."

The subject is profoundly important. It has serious philosophical implications. A vital sense of perfection, however achieved, can give you, or at least show you, a satisfying way of life, rich and full, simple and decent. This sense is composed, in part, of elements of service, thoroughness, faithfulness, whole-hearted contribution toward any organization of which you are a part, unselfishness, decent humility, a burning desire to improve. It simply means that you will never be satisfied with doing any less than your best in anything you undertake, no matter what it might be.

Striving for perfection is an essential part of the artist's point of view. The true artist, contrary to ordinary belief, is exact and thorough, at least in his art. He is not a careless and heedless Bohemian; he has a passion for doing things right. This is true of all great artists. Many of them seek perfection all their lives, perhaps never or seldom attaining it. But the search is the important thing. Recently I heard a great pianist of world-wide repu-

statue was so beautiful that the sculptor fell in love with it. He clasped the exquisite form to his heart and pressed kiss after kiss on the chiseled lips until gradually the cold clay responded and grew warm under his touch. The statue began to breathe and blood began to course through her veins. She became a living woman. And so with our play. Actors and director, working together skillfully, intelligently, emotionally, transform the lifeless printed page into that pulsing creation that holds audiences spellbound in a land of fancy which, for the time, is as real to them as life itself. To do that is an art. But remember that only with a real play—a good play—can you accomplish such high things. "Hitch your wagon to a star," I beg you, for your time and energy are precious.

I was told that he still practices six hours a day, not just to keep up his present standard of playing, but to improve, to come nearer to perfection. So far as I could judge, his playing was flawless. But his trained musicianship has revealed to him higher standards than those understood by the layman. This desire for perfection you can adopt in your own art of the theatre, and can, if you will, transfer it to all the affairs of your life.

Attainment of this sense of perfection requires a certain degree of "divine discontent." That is, you must always be looking for ways of improving yourself and your work. This is possible, of course. No notion is more hopeless in the young actor than the idea that he is just the way he is, and there is nothing to be done about it. We can improve, in habits, in personality, in character. This same "discontent" should be present in our attitude toward our work. We ought always to be looking for ways and means to better whatever we do.

In the theatre, absolute perfection must be the goal. Nearly right is not good enough. On stage, things must be *just right*. This does not mean that all theatre creators must conform to any single pattern of "rightness." I do not mean to suggest that all actors should do a certain part the same way, that all directors must have the same ideas about any given play, that all scene designers working on *Macbeth* should make identical settings. But all these should perform their tasks, as they conceive and understand them, with precision and nicety.

In production, I believe that we should decide at a certain stage of the rehearsal period that the pattern of the play has been established, that the rest of the time before the advertised date must be spent in what we call "polishing." That is simply our sense of perfection at work. It means that we have determined to do what we *can* do perfectly. Any Thespian group, at the particular phase of development in which any single performance finds it, has certain definite capabilities. The director, the actors, the stage crew, are ready and able to contribute certain things to a successful theatre evening. Your real job, for any one production, is to perform what you are capable of doing with absolute perfection. I suppose that absolute perfection is impossible; indeed, we probably do not even know what it is. But given the existing conditions of any one performance, we can do a show which is efficient, exact, almost flawless. The satisfaction derived from this striving for perfection, and the observable results to be gained by it, will make it possible for you to set a higher goal for each succeeding production. For every show, this means the setting of the highest standards you know.

Let me use an example. You probably have a pretty good basketball team in your school. It may not be the best in the state, but it very likely does a good job. Although it may not win a championship, it can do its job perfectly, in consideration of the abilities of the players, the coach, and the staff of assistants. Guarding, shooting, plays can be learned and performed in games almost without error. These results can be gained by condition, practice, intelligence, poise—the same qualities necessary for good work in the theatre.

The need for perfection in theatre (and the unhappy consequences of the "good enough" attitude) can be seen in many obvious ways. We all know the things that must be right before we can have a good performance. First of all, we must understand the play and our part in it completely. It is apparent that the actors must know their lines and their stage business. There is no excuse for frequent miffing of movement or lines. Anyone, even the best, can make a mistake, but not too often. Most amateur shows which are inaccurate are performed by groups which have developed no desire for perfection.

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CINCINNATI, OHIO

Were the desire strong enough, perfection would be more nearly reached. We need to achieve audience control, timing of laugh lines to the split second, accuracy entrances and exits. These, as you realize, are only a few opportunities we have to show that we know our jobs and how to do them exactly. Every detail of staging, too, must be handled with precision and accuracy. Lighting must be no guessing game; properties must be selected and handled with care; off stage effects must be "on the dime." And all these elements must be integrated into a fully designed unity of effect. You know as well as I do that this integration can be brought about only through work, practice, and patience.

In the professional theatre, there are some stars of the stage who are actor's actors. That is, other actors like to see them work. Often they are not spectacular; many times they play supporting roles rather than leads. But their colleagues know them as perfectionists in the art of acting, and go to their performances to applaud and to learn. In amateur dramatics, too, we find some of these seekers after perfection.

I wish I could invite you to some rehearsals of the play on which our college theatre is now working. Some of the actors and actresses are young, inexperienced, unknown. They have not achieved a sense of perfection in theatre, perhaps in nothing else. But they are beginning to learn, slowly and a bit painfully. One actress though, in whom I have great confidence, is already developing this sense in an unusual degree. Whether it be the fit of a wig, a line in make-up, the inflectional pattern of a speech, lettering for an advertising sign, or techniques suitable for playing a piano in character, she continually works for an exact, not an approximate, effect. She is never satisfied with the results of the early days of rehearsal. Each role improves as the date of production nears. All of you can do the same sort of thing, if you but have the desire to do so.

It is certain, then, that perfection in theatre is a desirable goal. This idea of perfection, which we should develop by our participation in dramatics, can be applied to life situations. In business, professions, physical and social sciences, this yearning for perfection and order dominates many leaders. This same pride in a task well-done which motivates you in your theatre work, this same passion for order, this same desire to do things right, will make you a better person and worker, no matter what your field of endeavor might be. I think that our religious impulses, too, derive in part from this desire. We want to understand the universe and our place in it; we strive to attain the perfections of some kind of divine and perfect plan.

Of course, the world is imperfect. But it is significant that many people in many countries in a world at war are looking past the years of sorrow, envisioning and planning a world which will come closer



A group of high school and junior college students at Plymouth, Mass., last summer.

## Plymouth Summer Theatre Offers Acting Experience to High School Graduates

THE high school graduate who looks toward a career in the theatre or radio today is faced with a different problem from the young man or woman of twenty years ago. The stock companies, flourishing in every large city, provided the necessary practical training for the professional stage. Today, the summer theatres take the place of the stock company.

One of the largest, oldest and most popular of these summer theatres is located at Plymouth, Cape Cod, Massachusetts. Here, on the shores of Cape Cod Bay, a Colony composed of 16 buildings and with a faculty of 17 professional directors, turns out the incredible number of five shows each week throughout the summer. A staff of eight directors keeps a variety of Broadway shows constantly in rehearsal and production. More than a thousand young men and women from every state in the Union have attended this remarkable theatre colony.

The number of high school and young college students who go on to careers in theatre and radio from Plymouth training is high. Last year, from a carefully selected group, ten found professional engagements in the professional theatre in New York and on the road, and thirty (almost the entire session), received summer stock engagements from three to eight weeks.

to a perfect order.

The philosopher and the abstract scientist have an absorbing desire for perfection for its own sake. If attainment of perfection can be approached, great practical results may ensue. But to such men, the first and greatest thing is perfection itself. We can learn much from the men of pure science. I once knew a distinguished scholar who was devoted to two things—science and music. One day I revealed my lack of perception by saying that this combination seemed unusual. I have never forgotten his reply. "On the contrary," he said, "nothing could be more natural.

Jack Harrington, a high school senior, went directly from Plymouth into the New York company of *Life with Father*. Kay Taylor, graduated from high school a year ago, was seen by talent scout at Plymouth and went from there to a New York production.

Several endowments for scholarships\* have been set up for those who cannot afford tuition, and talented high school seniors are eligible for these, in competition with hundreds from all over America.

Last summer, in addition to its 46 productions, the Festival presented plays at army camps and U. S. O. centers.

The Festival has five affiliated civilian theatres and stock companies on Cape Cod and at Providence, R. I., where students appear before talent scouts, agents and producers.

Encouraged by the fine tributes received from army authorities, the Festival will present 45 plays at various military camps and U. S. O. centers this coming summer, beginning June 23. This prolific schedule includes productions to be given at its various Cape Cod stock companies.

\* For information regarding scholarships, write to Plymouth Drama Festival, Plymouth, Massachusetts.

The rhythms and perfections of science and art are identical." Our art of theatre can teach us the concept of perfection. No matter where we learn it, it is a "required assignment" for all of us.

Those of us in the amateur theatre have no reason to be overly proud of our accomplishments in developing a sense of perfection. In some easy ways, we try to do things right. But we are likely to be too easily satisfied, too readily contented with "second best." I think we are improving; in fact, I know we are. But let us not be satisfied. Perfection, in anything, is not easy to come by.

THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN



# Exercises in Dramatics

by EDWIN LYLE HARDEN, M. A.

Director of Dramatics, New Braunfels High School, New Braunfels, Texas

## Building to Climaxes

TOO often amateur actors either disregard the principle of climax entirely by playing a scene on the same emotional level, or they find it difficult to execute a gradual crescendo to the highest point of interest. In every play there is a climax scene, many times reached by a series of lesser climaxes, in which the elements reach a high point of dramatic interest or suspense. The climactic point in the scene should be definitely determined and then the actors should begin moderately and with gradually increased intensity and rate build to that point. Unless the actors hold their force in reserve and exert it gradually, they will have spent themselves before they reach the point where the greatest expenditure of power is necessary for climactic effect.

The following scene, the climax scene from *The Undercurrent*, is typical of scene requiring this gradual build-up. As the scene progresses the tempo is increased by quicker cues, more rapid action, louder and more emotional voice, and intensified reaction. The exact point to which the the scene builds is Miss Page's line, "Yes! She's always there with me!"

## The Undercurrent\*

By FAY EHLERT

(Miss Page of the Morals Court has come to the Fishyer home to investigate the case of their wayward daughter, Annie. Annie has been lying to her parents to avoid the punishment of a domineering father.)

Annie (Protesting.): But honest, Mis' Page, I couldn't help it! (She looks around her like a hunted animal.) Ya see, I wuz . . . wuz . . . shhh! (The areaway door has opened and Mrs. Floyd appears on top stair.)

Mrs. Floyd (Her beady eyes glisten in anticipation as she surveys Annie.): Hello, there! (She stumps down the stairs.)

Annie (Instinctively on the defensive): H-ello! (Moves forward to head her off.) Ma's helping Pa!

Mrs. Floyd (Flinging her against the cupboard.): Listen, girly, I gotcha de first time! (Ma Fishyer enters hastily from door Right.)

Annie (Almost hysterical in her fright): Then beat it!

Ma Fishyer: Ach, Mis' Floyd, I heard yuh close yur door! Ve . . . ve heff company now . . . maybe it be better ve go on to yer flat . . .

Mrs. Floyd: Oh, this suits me, I ain't pertic'ler! (Seats herself, watching Annie signalling to Miss Page.) Who's her friend?

Ma Fishyer (Nervously): Oxcust me, but diss iss Annie's Mis' Page . . .

Mrs. Floyd (In response to Miss Page's nod.): Pleased to meetcha! (Annie crosses over to her mother and whispers distractedly in her ear.)

Ma Fishyer: Ve ain't finished our supper yet! Maybe it's better I come ofer and see yuh efter vile.

Mrs. Floyd (Not to be budged.): After while nuthin'! What did she say? (Pa Fishyer en-

ters unnoticed, wiping his hands.)

Ma Fishyer (Piteously.): Please, Mis' Floyd, eny minute now . . . Pa . . . Pa comes . . .

Mrs. Floyd (She thumbs toward Annie.): Did she say she wuz arrested?

Pa Fishyer: Arrested! (All look up in surprise. Annie cowers against the sink.) Who vas arrested?

Although the emotional level of the scene to this point is above normal, due to Annie's and Ma Fishyer's apprehension, nothing has occurred by way of progress to the climax. With Pa Fisyer's entrance the action begins to build rapidly. Annie has but one line before her outburst of fear; consequently she must build up to that emotional state. Pa Fishyer must build gradually to his, "Annie, come here!", and Ma Fishyer must reach her greatest force in "N-no, Pa, don't . . ." With each succeeding line to the climax the voice increases in volume and emotional tenseness, the action becomes more rapid, and the cues picked up more quickly.

Ma Fishyer (At bay.): Ach, Mis' Floyd hass just been talkin' . . . er . . . no vitch vay to me, haintcha, Mis' Floyd?

Pa Fishyer: Na . . . all right! (He thunders at his wife.) But who vas arrested?

Mrs. Floyd: Who? (Spitefully.) Well, Mr. Fishyer, a'course, it ain't none of my business, but seeing what good neighbors we been and how pertic'ler ya wuz to let me know that my son is a good-fer-nuthin' loafer . . . I take great pleasure to letcha know that one of yer swell family is, wuz, or will be arrested!

Pa Fishyer: Vat? My family vat I bring up so strict?

Mrs. Floyd (She cackles derisively.): Uhuh! Ain't it the limit?

Pa Fishyer (Purpling with rage.): Who iss it? Ma Fishyer (Clinging to his arm.): Pa, please . . . P-pa . . .

Pa Fishyer (He shakes her off.): Na, are yuh deaf? Na . . . who I say?

Mrs. Floyd (Vindictively.): Who else but yer Annie! (Annie becomes deathly pale and shrinks against the wall.)

Pa Fishyer (Turns furiously.): Vat? Ma Fishyer (She thrusts herself between Pa and Annie.): Mis' Page, Mis' Page . . .

Annie (Clasping her mother convulsively, whimpers.): M-ma!

Miss Page (Quickly.): There . . . there must be some mistake! Where did you hear this, Mrs. Floyd?

Mrs. Floyd's next speeches, of course, serve the very dramatic purpose of creating suspense by holding back the information we want. Care should be taken, however, not to let this retard the constant building-up process toward the climax. Pa Fishyer should become the more impatient and enraged because of the delay.

Mrs. Floyd: Well . . . a friend of mine went ta the Domestic Relations Court today to see about that husband of her'n . . . a perfect brute . . .

Pa Fishyer (Impatiently.): Yeh, nefer mind about de brute!

Mrs. Floyd: And so I went along, because I been reading a dandy story about the Morals Court . . . yeh know . . . (She winks to Miss Page as she thumbs in Annie's direction.) . . . where them girls are taken . . . and so I sez ta myself . . . sez I . . .

Pa Fishyer (Exasperated.): Vat?

Mrs. Floyd: That's what I'm comin' ta. So I sez ta myself, I'll visit the Morals Court and see if them fellas from the papers tell the truth! (Pa almost beside himself with frenzy.) But I stayed so long with my friend that the judge wuz jest closin' fer the day. But who should I see there . . . but Annie!

Pa Fishyer (Choking with wrath, turns wildly with uplifted fist towards Annie.): Annie, come here!

Ma Fishyer (Holding him back.): Don't Pa, please, don't . . .

Pa Fishyer (Trying to loosen her hold.): Keep quiet!

Miss Page (Resolutely.): That isn't anything at all, Mr. Fishyer!

Pa Fishyer (Bellows.): Vat more you vant, efter bringing up a girl so strict?

Ma Fishyer (Screams in terror as she feels herself overpowered.): Pa, please . . . P-pa . . .

Pa Fishyer: Vill yuh keep quiet! (Furiously to Annie, whimpering in terror.) First, I giff you someding to remember me by . . . and den out off de house yuh go!

Ma Fishyer (Fighting to hold him back.): N-no, Pa, don't . . .

Pa Fishyer (Throwing her on the floor.): Get out off my vay, Ma! (He shouts enraged.) Annie, come here! Yuh hear me! (He grasps her by the arm and jerks her toward him.)

The past two speeches represent Ma Fishyer's and Pa Fishyer's emotional climaxes. However, we have not yet reached the climax of the scene. Annie should be prepared to take over here at this emotional level, and continue to build higher emotionally to the real climax, Miss Page's line, so that the suspense of the scene becomes ever greater.

Annie (Writhing in pain as he tightens his hold.): No . . . no! It's . . . It's a lie . . . a lie . . .

Mrs. Floyd (Rising in surprise.): Huh!

Annie: Yes, it is! (She glares about her with the desperation of a trapped animal.) Yes, it is! I . . . I wuz . . . there . . . (She points sobbingly to Miss Page.) . . . with her!

Pa Fishyer: Mit her? Mis' Page?

Annie (Trying to loosen his grip.): Yes, I wuz helping her carry her book . . . (She nods to Mrs. Floyd.) . . . when she musta seen me! (Miss Page is startled with Annie's lie.)

Pa Fishyer (Tightening his cruel hold until she falls sobbing on her knees.): Yat you mean?

Annie (The words fairly tumble from her twitching lips.): Mis' Page works fer de judge . . . h-helps him . . . and I often go to de court with h-her . . . don't I, Mis' Page? (An agonizing second, Miss Pages gives one glance at Ma Fishyer's prostrated form on the floor and then rises to the occasion.)

Miss Page: Yes! She's always there with me!

Miss page's answer here terminates the dramatic interest of the scene. The remainder of the scene gradually diminishes in force after the suspense has been broken.

Ma Fishyer (Tries to separate his iron grip from Annie's arm.): Yuh see, Pa? Yuh see?

Pa Fishyer (Slightly mollified, to Miss Page.): Ef she's there mit yuh, Mis' . . . dot's all right, den! (Flings Annie and Ma from him. While Ma tenderly kisses Annie's arm, he turns wrathfully toward Mrs. Floyd.) BUT! (Mrs. Floyd, seeing his intentions, scurries up the stairs.) . . . Goodbye, Mis' Floyd! (Runs up the stairs and shouts after her.) And the next time yuh LOOK first before yuh jump!

\*The Undercurrent, by Fay Ehlert. Published by Samuel French, New York, N. Y.

# Staging the High School Play

This department is designed to assist teachers in choosing, casting, and producing plays at the high school level. Suggestions as to plays which should be discussed next or how this department may be of greater assistance to teachers will be welcomed.

Edited by EARL W. BLANK

Thespian Senior Councilor and Director of Dramatics at Berea College, Berea, Ky.

## Sun-Up

(As produced and directed by Earl W. Blank at Berea College.)  
by RUBY BALL

Senior student and art director for Sun-Up.

*Sun-Up*. A drama in three acts, by Lula Vollmer. 1917 costumes. 6 men; 2 women. One interior. Royalty, \$25.00. Longmans, Green and Company, Inc., 55 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

### Suitability

*Sun-Up* is a folk play and, as native folk drama, makes excellent material for presentation in the high schools of this country. Because it is also a war play there has been some hesitation about giving it at this time (November-December, 1942). In reality the world war of 1914-17 is a mere incident in relation to the feuds and the every day affairs of the Cagles and the Todds and their neighbors. It is not a pacifistic play; neither does it contain war propaganda.

There are both advantages and disadvantages to producing *Sun-Up* in the mountain region. It is good dramatic training for the high school student to interpret the people whom he knows. On the other hand, there is danger that the significance of the play may be missed if the audience questions the authenticity of its staging. An audience familiar with the hill people might be distracted by such details as the preacher's beard, or how many patches Pap Todd would have on his overalls, or whether or not corn would be hoed in September.

### Plot

The play opens with Widow Cagle sitting in front of her fireplace smoking a pipe. (Where tobacco is not permitted, "rabbit tobacco" makes a very good substitute.) Her neighbor, Pap Todd, comes over to "set a spell" with her and casually observes that there is a war going on, a story which Widow Cagle scornfully disposes of with "Taint so! Thar aint no reason for war. Didn't the Yanks free the

nigger more than fifty year ago?" She soon learns, however, that not only is there a war, but that her son Rufe has enlisted instead of staying home as he should to hunt down and kill his father's murderer. Before he leaves Rufe calls in the preacher from "acrost the mounting" to perform the marriage ceremony between himself and Emmy, Pap's pretty daughter. Others present are Bud, Emmy's half-wit brother, and the sheriff, a blustering, bullying deputy who also wants to marry Emmy.

Winter comes and Bud occasionally brings in a letter from Rufe to Emmy and Mis' Cagle. One night, during a violent snowstorm, the widow is saving such a letter for Emmy to read when she returns from taking care of Pap Todd, who is suffering from too much liquor. Suddenly there is a halooing at the door and the widow lets in a young stranger, half starved and half frozen, a fugitive from the law. While she protects him from the sheriff, the stranger admits that he is a deserter from an army camp. A little later Emmy returns and painfully spells out the message that Rufe has been killed in action. Still Widow Cagle protects her guest from the sheriff, risking her life and her freedom to do so. When the sheriff returns with the news that the stranger is Zeb Turner, the son of the "revenuer" who killed her husband, she gets her shotgun and prepares to take the law into her own hands. The stranger begs her, for her own sake, to let him give himself up to the law instead of killing him. Emmy flings herself in front of the stranger. Suddenly Widow Cagle hears a voice, Rufe's. Slowly she repeats after him while the others stare at her as if she had lost her mind, "Yes, son? 'As long as thar air hate, thar'll be feuds.' Yes, son? Don't none of ye hear him? 'Hit's lovin them all that counts.'" Finally she sits down limply, the hate of the feud gone out of her. She and Emmy smuggle the stranger out in Bud's clothes, past the sheriff and his posse, and he goes back to camp. She prepares to give herself up to the law; but even the sheriff is touched by her spirit and leaves her free to walk out into the brilliant sunrise, which is the symbol of a new day for the mountain people.

### Casting

While none of the roles are really difficult, they all offer opportunity for mature acting.

Widow Cagle is easily the most domin-

## Ruby Ball

RUBY BALL is a senior in Berea College and an active member of the Berea Players. The designing of the set for *Sun-Up* was a part of an independent study project which is open to seniors. The term "independent study" is self-descriptive. The student receives class credit for work done largely on his own initiative and with a minimum of supervision.

Miss Ball is an Art Major who is interested also in writing and in dramatics. We believe that it is good educational procedure to integrate the work of the various departments on the campus. For this reason we are glad to have on our staff students whose interest is in the various related fields of art, as well as in one particular phase of the work.

ant character in the play. She needs to have a low voice and be able to achieve the composure of the hill people. The Widow Cagle in this play was thin, wiry, virile.

Pap Todd has spent twenty years in jail for moonshining. Dirty, drunken, emaciated, too, is indicated by his voice which has a shrill, cracked quality.

Emmy is young and shy. She should be shorter in stature than Widow Cagle and a little coquettish at times.

Bud is called a half-wit but Rufe says of him, "Bud's no fool." His role lends itself beautifully to a sensitive interpretation. An inexperienced actor unfortunately may make of it a comic part.

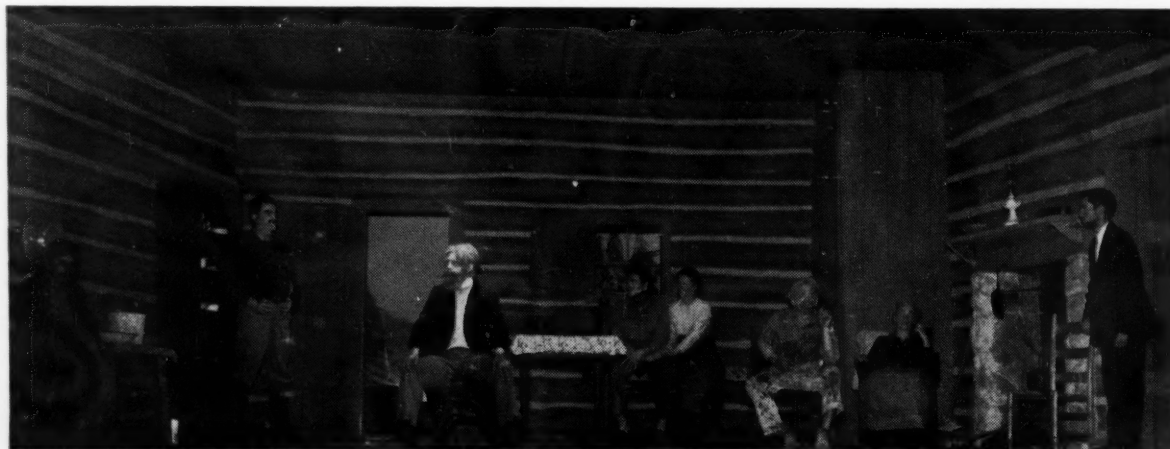
The sheriff is a blustering, swaggering, "gun-tottin'" bully. He may be padded to give a pompous effect. Much can be done with make-up to give him the florid complexion and the bristling mustache of the hillbilly deputy. He need not be tall.

Rufe is young and modest, with all the attractive qualities of the handsome and upstanding young man of the mountains. He needs to be of average height or above, strong and healthy looking. Be careful that he is not the matinee idol type.

The preacher is easily burlesqued and care should be taken to avoid this, if the play is to be taken seriously. Physically, he may be almost any type.

The stranger is thin, nervous, neurotic.

Setting for the three acts of *Sun-Up* as designed by Ruby Ball, student art director, and executed by Charles Lineberger, student technical director.





For this part an actor should be chosen who has had enough experience to reach the emotional climax needed for the gun scene.

Bob was eliminated from the cast because the director felt that an unstimulating role was not enough compensation for the demands of repeated rehearsals.

## Direction

A reviewer referred to *Sun-Up* as "Widow Cagle's play." The director's chief concern was with character development and with the necessity for giving each player a fair chance. From the first the characters were regarded with the utmost intention of travesty on the mountain people. To help achieve authenticity, there are some excellent general hints in *The High School Thespiian* article on *The Trail of the Lonesome Pine* Vol. XIV, No. 2, November, 1942.

The curtain scenes are very important. At the end of Act I, a blackout followed Rufe's announcement that he had enlisted in the army. At the end of Act II the more subdued tempo was emphasized by a dimout. Act III, Scene 1, needs the dramatic quality of a blackout; and at the end of Act III, Scene 2, the lights came up brilliantly for the sunrise which gave the play its name.

*Sun-Up* lends itself easily to overdramatization. It is better to subdue to the point of underplaying than to strain the credulity of the audience by a tendency toward melodrama. The gun scene, particularly, should be watched; the preacher should economize on spitting; and Widow Cagle needs especially to underplay the vision and the final scenes. The lights and the picture of Widow Cagle against them are so dramatic that her lines may be spoken simply, unemotionally.

The play should not drag. Total playing time, including the intermissions, should not exceed one and one half hours. The old rule of rapid cues and slow speeches will keep the performance lively and, at the same time, sincere and simple. The playing of "Taps" and the raising and dimming of the lights are the easiest mechanical means of emphasizing atmosphere.

## Stage Problems

It is the function of the cast to translate to the audience the feelings and the undercurrents that give the play emotional as well as intellectual appeal. It is the problem of the director and his staff to help the cast by suggesting the atmosphere so adequately that the audience will feel it even before a line is spoken.

The *Sun-Up* set needs to suggest not only the impending tragedy of Rufe's death, but the drabness and poverty in some sections of the mountains. A neutral gray was chosen for the log interior, cool rather than warm. The surprise pink lights used in the first act gave the walls a steely gray cast, austere and simple as Widow Cagle's house would be. The blue lights used throughout Act III gave a moody touch that was a fitting background for the gun

## COSTUMES

| Character         | Act I   | Act II   | Act III   |
|-------------------|---|--|---|
| Widow Cagle ..... | Black print dress, black and white apron, black hose, black shoes, bonnet, shawl.   | Same.  | Black heavy dress; same otherwise.  |
| Pap Todd .....    | Old trousers (very dirty), dirty shirt, age hump, rope suspenders, shoes, no socks. | Same.  |   |
| Emmy .....        | Pink skirt, blouse, black and white apron.  | Print dress, brown shoes, black stockings, lace collar, white apron.   | Black skirt, gray blouse, same shoes and stockings, dark blue apron, shawl. |
| Bud .....         | Shirt, overalls.  | Same.  | Winter shirt, overalls, rough coat, shoes, stocking cap.                    |
| Rufe .....        | Overalls, shirt, no shoes nor socks.  | Same, but neater shoes.  |   |
| Sheriff .....     | Padding, plaid shirt, trousers, vest, boots, badge.                                 | Same.  | Same, hunter's coat and hat.  |
| Preacher .....    |   | Old Prince Albert coat, baggy gray trousers, striped shirt, preacher's collar, black shoes, socks, battered opera hat. |   |
| Stranger .....    |   |  | Loose, dark coat and trousers, white shirt, black socks, slippers.          |

scene. For the log walls, the flats were painted an all-over background color before they were set up. To assure continuous stripes the "chinks" were painted after the flats were in place on the stage. Shadows, added to give depth, were also painted after the flats were in place.

Doors, window shutter and furniture were built by the stagecraft class. A simulated stone fireplace was made by covering a frame with muslin, stuffing it with newspapers, and painting it to give the appearance of natural rock.

The outdoor scene was more difficult because of the seasonal changes. The first act took place in July, the second in September, and the third in February. We considered moving in set pieces, such as trees, corn shocks and the like, but abandoned the idea in favor of a painted backdrop. We painted a mountain scene, using bold brush strokes and strong, pure colors that would not lose their identity under the backstage floodlight. The trees were evergreen, requiring a minimum of touching up for the winter scene. At the end of Act I, the only changes were the removal of the row of red tomatoes from the window sill and the substituting of a branch of autumn-colored leaves for the green branch outside the window. At

the end of Act II, we changed the September hillside to a snow scene by thumbtacking cotton batting on the hills and white scrim over the trees. Old muslin and cotton batting were piled up outside the door and made very convincing snow banks. At the window a snow-covered branch was tacked up and cotton batting "snow" was tacked onto the panes.

Because a quick change is necessary, it is suggested that there be a staff of four or five people and that they rehearse a few times in changing to the winter scene.

## Publicity

Advertising was done through posters placed in prominent places in Berea and nearby towns, and through write-ups running for several weeks in the college and local newspapers. This year the publicity director departed from the tradition of using professionally printed posters and asked for help from the Art Department. Posters were submitted by members of two classes in Design, and the one finally chosen was reproduced thirty times by the process of silk screen printing. This process is expensive in terms of labor. Here it was made practical by using it in relation to classroom work.

Inquiries about the silk screen process may be addressed to Miss Harriet Gill of the Berea College Art Department, Berea, Kentucky. There are several good sources of information now on the market. One of the better references is:

Harry Sternberg, *Silk Screen Color Printing*, \$3.00. McGraw, Hill and Company, New York City.

## Budget

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| Lighting and Stagecraft .....           | \$ 38.12 |
| Miscellaneous (including royalty) ..... | 57.58    |
| Costuming .....                         | 2.30     |
| Publicity .....                         | 20.03    |
| Make-up .....                           | 5.00     |

Total ..... \$123.03

## Educational Results

A note on our program says, "We are presenting *Sun-Up* with greatest respect. It is being staged for its excellent theatre value and the universal theme it carries. It is a great folk play and is a living drama because it is native literature."

Watch for the staging of *Peter Pan* in the October issue.

## MAKE-UP

| SHERIFF                       |                  | WIDOW CAGLE             |                       |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Age .....                     | 40               | Age .....               | 50                    |
| Make-up .....                 | middle age       | Make-up .....           | middle age            |
| Grease paint .....            | 11 and 5         | Grease paint .....      | 11                    |
| Eyes .....                    | heavily lined    | Eyes .....              |                       |
| Shadow .....                  | lake             | Shadow .....            | lake                  |
| Liner .....                   | lake             | Liner .....             | lake                  |
| Rouge .....                   | none             | Hair .....              | blackened with        |
| Lipstick .....                | none             |                         | burnt cork and grayed |
| Mustache .....                | dark brown       |                         | with cornstarch.      |
| Powder .....                  | 11               | Powder .....            | 11                    |
| EMMY                          |                  | BUD                     |                       |
| Make-up .....                 | straight         | Age .....               | 20                    |
| Grease paint .....            | 4                | Make-up .....           | straight              |
| Eyes .....                    |                  | Grease paint .....      | 5                     |
| Shadow .....                  | blue             | Eyes .....              |                       |
| Lipstick (light) .....        | medium           | Shadow .....            | brown                 |
| Rouge (light) .....           | medium           | Rouge (slight) .....    | medium                |
| Powder .....                  | 4                | Stubble .....           | light brown           |
|                               |                  | Powder .....            | 5                     |
| PAP TODD                      |                  | RUFÉ                    |                       |
| Age .....                     | 75               | Age .....               | 22                    |
| Make-up .....                 | old age          | Make-up .....           | straight              |
| Grease paint .....            | 11               | Grease paint .....      | 5 and 6               |
| Eyes .....                    | heavily shadowed | Eyes .....              |                       |
| Liner .....                   | lake             | Shadow .....            | brown                 |
| Rouge .....                   | none             | Liner .....             | black                 |
| Lipstick .....                | none             | Rouge (slight) .....    | medium                |
| Beard .....                   | light gray       | Lipstick (slight) ..... | medium                |
| (stained with tobacco juice). |                  | Powder .....            | 5                     |
| Powder .....                  | 11               | Hair .....              | tousled               |
| Eyebrows .....                | white            |                         |                       |
| STRANGER                      |                  | PREACHER                |                       |
| Age .....                     | 16               | Age .....               | 50                    |
| Make-up .....                 | straight         | Grease paint .....      | 11 and 5              |
| Grease paint .....            | 5                | Eyes .....              |                       |
| Rouge (slight) .....          | medium           | Shadow .....            | lake                  |
| Lipstick .....                | none             | Liner .....             | lake                  |
| Eye shadow .....              | brown            | Age, liner .....        | lake                  |
| Powder .....                  | 5                | Full beard .....        |                       |
|                               |                  | Powder .....            | 11                    |

# The Technician's Roundtable

Conducted by A. S. GILLETTE

Technical Director, University Theatre, State University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa

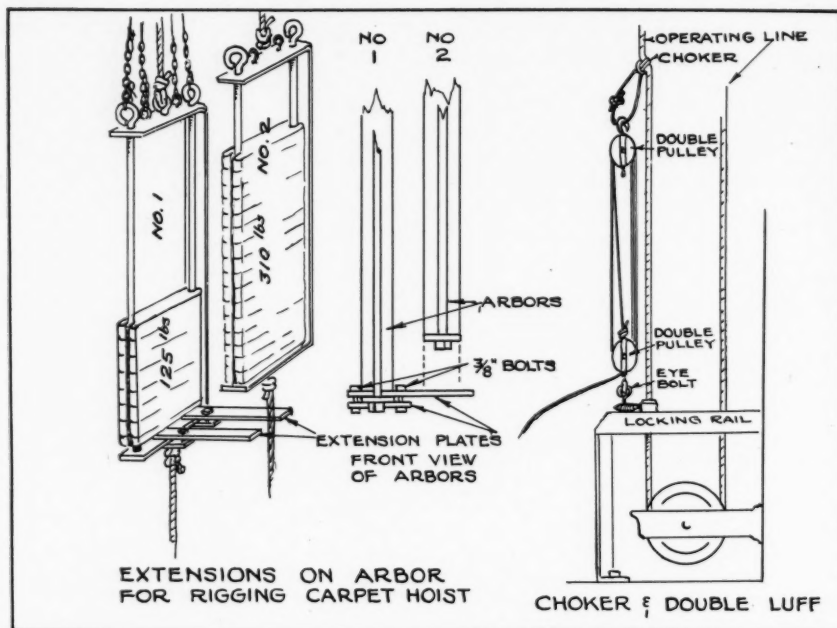
**QUESTION:** We are considering a production of *High Tor* but have hesitated to announce it because of the technical problem involved with those scenes that depend on the raising and lowering of two men in the "bucket" of a steam shovel. Although our stage has a counterweight system, I do not see how it can be used to solve this problem. When the scene opens the empty bucket, weighing 124 pounds, is seen suspended above the setting. It is pulled down to the set which at this point is five feet above the stage floor and two actors, weighing 310 pounds, are forced into it. The bucket and actors are then pulled back up to the original trim. We couldn't reach the arbor from the loading platform, even if there was sufficient time to add the 310 pounds needed to counter-balance the actors. Can this problem be solved with our present equipment?

**Answer:** A special rigging arrangement known as a Carpet Hoist will solve this problem for you. The only additional equipment you would need would be four short lengths of  $\frac{1}{2}$ "x2" strap iron and four machine bolts that will be used in making the arbor extensions. In principle this rigging depends on two counterweight units, one supporting and counterbalancing the empty bucket, the other handling the counterweight equal to the weight of the two actors. After the actors have gotten into the bucket the second arbor engages the first and the two are then operated as one. The essential requirement of this rigging is the need for two arbors that operate in adjacent tracks. Bolt two metal extensions,  $\frac{1}{2}$ "x2"x10" to the bottom plate of the first arbor (see sketch), allowing them to project to one side so that the second arbor cannot be lowered past the first without resting on these extensions. Raise both arbors to the grid, attach the bucket to batten counterbalanced by the arbor with the extensions, add the necessary counterweight to this arbor to balance the bucket. This must be done before the set is in position on stage, otherwise you will not be able to lower the batten sufficiently to raise the arbor up to the loading platform, where it can be reached. Raise batten No. 1, and the set is in position beneath it. Now lower the bucket until it rests on the set. Counterweight equalling the combined weight of the two actors is now added to arbor No. 2 and lowered until it rests against the extensions on arbor No. 1, where it is locked off. Use a stopper hitch on the operating line as well as the rope lock for additional safety. (This operation of lowering the counterweight should not be attempted until adequate safety precautions have first been made, for remember you are lowering 310 pounds

of unbalanced counterweight. This can be done with a choker and double luff described elsewhere on this page.) After arbor No. 2 has been locked off the No. 1 lines may be unlocked and the bucket raised to the proper height for the playing of the scene. The two sets of lines are now rigged to handle the business of the scene. Its operation is as follows: the empty bucket is lowered to the stage set, which raises its arbor until its extensions are resting against the bottom or arbor No. 2. The two actors get into the bucket, the rope locks are opened, which permits the 310 pounds to rest against the extension on arbor No. 1, thus counterbalancing the weight of the actors and permitting the two operating lines to be raised or lowered as one. When the bucket is again lowered to the stage floor for the actors to get out, be sure to lock off the No. 2 arbor before the actors leave the bucket. Should the empty batten attached to the No. 2 arbor interfere with your rigging or come within sightlines, it may be unfastened from the arbor and tied off permanently at the grid. Three or four steel cables run from the batten over the loft blocks and head block and are fastened to the arbor by connecting chains and snap hooks. While the orbor is at the stage floor, unfasten these chains one at a time and re-fasten them to the scenery stacking rail, which will leave the arbor free to operate without the batten.

**QUESTION:** How can a loaded arbor be lowered from the loading platform to a given position when there is no scenery of equal weight attached to the batten to counter-balance it?

**Answer:** The "choker" and double luff rigging attached to the operating line and locking rail of a counterweight unit will handle this problem, and has the additional advantage of being operated from the stage floor. The choker is made



from a  $2\frac{1}{2}$  ft. length of  $\frac{1}{4}$ " steel cable with the two ends clamped together with a cable clamp to form an endless loop. With the empty arbor opposite the loading platform at the grid, the choker is looped around the outer operating line a few feet above the locking rail. Until a strain is placed on the choker, it will have a tendency to slip; this can be prevented by taping the cable to the operating line. Rig two double pulleys that will accommodate  $\frac{1}{2}$ " rope into a double luff rigging. Engage the hook of one pulley to the loop formed by the choker, engage the hook of the second pulley through a  $\frac{3}{8}$ " eye bolt fastened to the locking rail. Tighten the lines between the two pulleys by pulling on the fall, then tie it off. The arbor may now be loaded with counterweight, the load being held in position by the double luff. Since the double luff has a mechanical advantage of 4 to 1, one person can easily lower the loaded arbor to a given position by untying the fall and paying out line to the tackle rigging.

**QUESTION:** Our stage, which is in the assembly hall, must be used for other activities besides plays, consequently we are not permitted to store any scenery in the very shallow grid. We need a ceiling badly but the only storage space is under the auditorium, which is but a little longer than half the length of any ceiling we could use. Can a roll ceiling be constructed so that it would fold into a bundle we could store in such a space?

**Answer:** Yes, a roll ceiling can be built so that it will fold into a compact bundle only half its original length. The lengthwise battens are made of 1"x4", two equal lengths to each batten. These sections are hinged end to end with heavy 10" or 12" barn-door hinges fastened to the battens with stove bolts. The hinges must be on the face of the ceiling, with the canvas glued to the hinges and tacked around them. This will permit the ceiling to fold face to face





# Make-up For the High School Theatre

by PROF. RAY E. HOLCOMBE

Department of Drama, Ithaca College, Ithaca, N. Y.

Questions pertaining to your problems on make-up are welcomed by Prof. Holcombe. Enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your letter.



## Plastic Make-up

**Questions:** Is it practical for me to attempt making artificial jowls or a double chin for a character in a high school play?—G. B. C.

How does one apply a putty nose?—L. M.

Is soaping out eyebrows the only method employed to make a major change in the eyebrows?—R. C. T.

Can the upper lip be altered successfully for making up older characters.—S. A.

How would I make a mole on the face?

**Answers:**

**Making artificial cheek pads and a double chin**

THE technique of enlarging certain areas of the face is of great practical value to high school groups, since the director is often faced with problems which might be solved by employment of plastic make-up. Although the process needs a little preliminary practice before the make-up artist can depend on sure effects, it is not as difficult as is commonly thought, and the results are often miraculous.

The materials needed are: a roll of cotton, spirit gum, scissors, water, and a brush.

The principle involved, in building up the cotton pad for each protruding area, is one of laying down successive layers of cotton, each layer larger than the one below it and the outer edge of each layer being stuck to the skin.

For making a cheek pad such as the one illustrated, start by cutting out of a layer of cotton an oval piece about the size of an elongated twenty-five cent piece. Next, gently fray out the edges all the way around until the oval bevels down to an extremely thin layer for three-eighths of an inch or so. Then put spirit gum on the area where you contemplate making the biggest bulge. When the spirit gum becomes tacky, stick down the edges of the first layer. Each successive

after the cross battens have been removed. If the ceiling is supported from an adequate number of points along the lengthwise battens there will be no danger of the ceiling sagging at the point of hinging. Should this happen to be the case, the sagging can be removed by placing 1"x3" or 1"x4" stiffening battens parallel with the lengthwise battens.

layer is made just a bit larger than the preceding one and affixed in the same way. Enough layers are applied to bulge out the area about one-third larger than is desired for the finished product. The wetting down later will materially reduce the bulge of the dry cotton. When the last and largest layer is completed, dip a water color brush in water and shape the entire top layer with the brush. While it is still wet, apply spirit gum. This will result in a shell-like outer surface on the pad.

When the spirit gum is dry, apply another coating. After the second application the pad is ready to be colored. Mix a small portion of the base color you expect to use with a generous amount of moist rouge. This should be done with cold cream or mineral oil, for the color needs to be fluid enough to be painted on with a brush. Now, gently paint the pad with the reddish color and let it set just a bit before going to the rest of the make-

up. I have described the process of making only one of the cheek pads. In actual practice, the laying down of each layer for the two pads would be done at the same time as a check on getting them even. The double chin pad would be applied in the same way.

## Making a putty nose

OUR concern in giving directions about applying putty noses will be that of giving helpful hints which dispose of the troubles usually encountered. In the first place, be sure that the nose is free of grease paint and oil. The natural skin oil can be removed by means of a dab of cotton dipped in alcohol. Secondly, do not handle the nose putty if your hands have had cold cream on them. Put a ball of the kneaded putty on the nose, as shown in the sketch. Bevel the putty down to a very thin edge at the top, at the sides and at the base of the nose. The thin edge of the putty must smoothly adhere to the skin at the outer limits to which you wish the artificial nose to extend. Then, when there is a smooth joint, dip the fingers in cold cream and smooth and shape the surface. It must be remembered, however, that no fresh efforts to make the putty stick to the skin can be made once cold cream is introduced. In other words, be sure that the nose is well affixed before using the cold cream.

## Plastic eyebrows

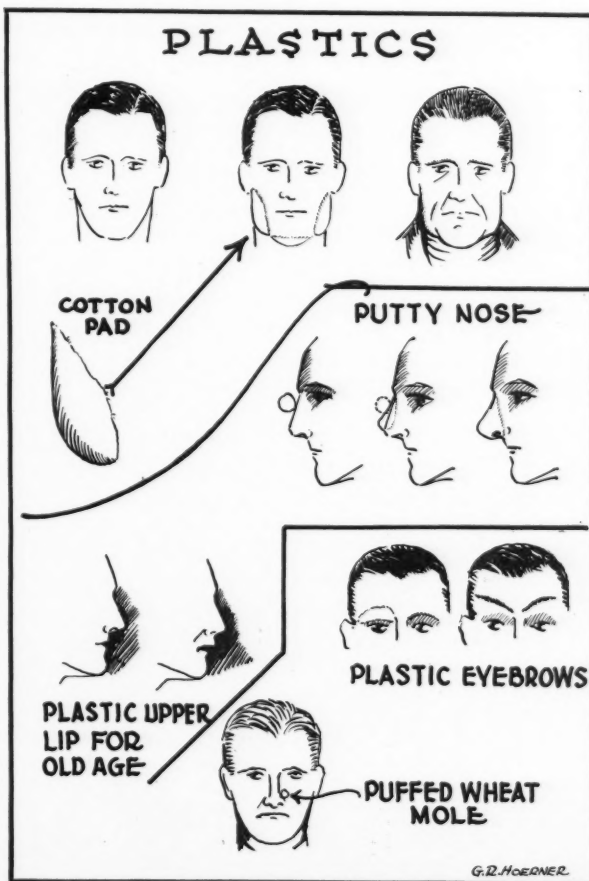
A SMALL pad of cotton of a size to cover the eyebrows can be "glued on" by applying spirit gum below and above the eyebrows. Then the mid-portion is moistened and spirit gum applied. These pads are then covered with the base color applied with a brush. If the effect of protruding brows is desired, add more layers. Eyebrows may then be applied in some other location as shown in the sketch.

## Plastic upper lip

A VERY remarkable effect of an old age upper lip can be made by using long and narrow cotton pads in just the same way as has been outlined for making the eyebrow and cheek pads.

## The Puffed Wheat mole

THE mole made with nose putty is a fussy thing to handle, and very often, when a moustache is used, the putty gets tangled with the hair. Instead, I advise using a puffed wheat mole. Take a rather large puffed wheat grain, slice it with a razor blade, then stick the flat surface to the face with spirit gum. Color the mole with a lighter shade than the base by brushing the color on, or leave it uncolored. The natural color is quite satisfactory.





1. Marilyn Baylison as a specialty dancer in the musical show, *Wanted: A Man*, at the William Penn Senior High School, York, Pa. Marilyn is a member of Troupe 520. 2. Scene from *You Can't Take It With You* as given at the Ensley, Ala., High School. (Thespian Troupe No. 258.) Miss Florence Pass directed. 3. Robin Blaser as "Charley's Aunt" in the production of the same name at the Twin Falls, Idaho, High School. Miss Florence M. Rees, director. 4. Thespian Ann Leibowitz as one of the players in *Wanted: A Man*, at the William Penn Senior High School, York, Pa. 5. Scene from *Three Live Ghosts* as given by members of Troupe No. 503 at the John Harris High School, Harrisburg, Pa. Mrs. Permelia Rose Emanuel, director.



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## Schools Enlisted in the High School Theatre for Victory Program

(Continued from page 3)

Staged "You Can't Take It With You" for soldiers at Fort Niagara; contributed to Stage Door Canteen Fund.

- ★ Dramatic Guild (Thespian Troupe No. 322), Clayton, Mo., High School. Blandford Jennings, sponsor. Gave two performances of the play, "Engaged," at Scott Field; gave a performance of "Sixteen in August" at the Engineers' Depot, Granite City, Ill.
- ★ Thespian Troupe No. 352, Robbinsdale, Minn., High School. Bess V. Sinnott, sponsor. Gave benefit performances for Red Cross; presented program at Fort Snelling; contributed to Stage Door Canteen Fund.
- ★ Thespian Troupe No. 385, Centerville, Iowa, High School. Bernice Moore, sponsor. Staged "They Burned The Books," and "Time Is Short," as plays stimulating to the war effort.
- ★ Fassivern Dramatic Club (Troupe No. 145), Fassivern, School for Girls, Hendersonville, N. C., Gene Bryson, sponsor. Produced patriotic plays, "Time Is Short" and "Hitler Has A Vision."
- ★ Dramatics Club (Thespian Troupe 425), Tucson, Ariz., High School. Lillian Cavett, sponsor. Gave state-wide radio performance of "Listen to the People"; contributed to Stage Door Canteen Fund.
- ★ Dramatics Club (Thespian Troupe 372), Wellsburg, W. Va., High School. Iva G. Brashear, sponsor. Presented evening of one-act plays with part of net proceeds given to the Stage Door Canteen Fund.
- ★ Thespian Troupe No. 272, Hibbing, Minn.,

High School. Donald Woods, sponsor. Staged benefit performance of "Out of the Frying Pan" with net proceeds given to Junior Red Cross; contribution to Stage Door Canteen.

- ★ Thespian Troupe No. 62, Jersey Twp. High School, Jerseyville, Ill. Edyth M. Breen, sponsor. Staged program of one-act plays with part of net proceeds given to Stage Door Canteen Fund.
- ★ Thespian Troupe 439, McCray-Dewey Twp. High School, Troy, Ill. Ann Herron, sponsor. Contribution to Stage Door Canteen Fund; large contribution of books to army camps; donation to Red Cross.
- ★ Thespian Troupe No. 483, Richwood, W. Va., High School. Miss Christine White, sponsor. Staged program of three one-act plays with part of net proceeds given to the Stage Door Canteen Fund; staged play festival with net proceeds given to the Red Cross.
- ★ Dramatics Club, Riley High School, South Bend, Ind. Betty Jo Hanson, sponsor. Staged "Mrs. Miniver" as play stimulating to the war effort.
- ★ Thespian Troupe No. 269 — Dramatics Classes, Boonville, Ind., High School. Ravia Garrison, sponsor. Presented several patriotic programs stimulating to the war effort.
- ★ Speech Department — Dramatics Classes, Wichita, Kansas, East High School. Hazel Shamleffer, director. Presented choric pageant, "If He Could Speak"; staged several patriotic programs; provide Victory Speakers.
- ★ Thespian Troupe No. 66, Lehman High School, Canton, Ohio. Florence E. Hill, sponsor. Wrote and produced a patriotic musical show, "Musical Stars."
- ★ Thespian Troupe No. 175, State College, Pa., High School. Janette M. Burns, sponsor. Presented patriotic pageant, "These Things Shall Endure"; contributed to Stage Door Canteen and Red Cross; enrolled in the Victory Corps.

★ Thespian Troupe No. 368, Geneva, Ohio, High School. Dorothy V. Diles, sponsor. Presented patriotic pageant, "Music Masque"; staged "The American Way"; staged many patriotic assemblies and radio programs.

★ Thespian Troupe No. 121, Stonewall Jackson High School, Charleston, W. Va. Teresa C. White, sponsor. Presented patriotic plays stimulating to the war effort.

★ Dramatics Department, Newark, Ohio, Senior High School. Betty Burris, director. Staged patriotic skit, "The Ramparts We Watch," promoted sale of war bonds and stamps; contribution to Stage Door Canteen Fund.

★ Thespian Troupe 503, John Harris High School, Harrisburg, Pa. Permelia Rose Emanuel, sponsor. Staged "Three Live Ghosts" with part of proceeds given to Stage Door Canteen Fund; three performances of "Message to Bataan" as aid to stamp and bond sales; class day patriotic pageant, "Fun To Be Free."

★ Thespian Troupe 473, Celina, Ohio, High School. Hazel Fashbaugh, sponsor. Staged Benet's "We Burned the Books."

★ Thespian Troupe No. 511, St. John's Academy, Wichita, Kansas. Sister M. Ambrosine, sponsor. Staged "Letters to Lucerne" as play stimulating to the war effort.

★ Black Masque Dramatic Club, North High School, Denver, Colo. Katharine Anne Ommanney, sponsor. Staged full-length play at Lowry Field and Fitzsimmons Military Hospital; purchased war bonds.

★ Thespian Troupe No. 279, Spencer, W. Va., High School. Emma Neal Bogges, sponsor. Staged "Mrs. Miniver" with net proceeds given to the Stage Door Canteen Fund; produced Red Cross plays.

★ Thespian Troupe No. 424, Edmonds, Wash., High School. Mrs. Grace Bliss, sponsor. Staged patriotic program, "Land of the Free."

# SPECIAL OFFER

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James Hilton's

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A different and unusual dramatization about four people kidnapped and brought to the mysterious Shangri-La, where time stands still. It uses only one set. Price, 75c. Royalty, \$25.00.

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John Cecil Holm's

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Earl Derr Biggers'

## THE HOUSE WITHOUT A KEY

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Anne Coulter Marten's

## DON'T TAKE MY PENNY!

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## On the High School Stage

News about interesting and important events in the field of high school dramatics. Dramatics directors are urged to contribute brief articles concerning their major activities from month to month.

### Great Neck, N. Y.

**T**ROUPE No. 201 of the Great Neck High School started its current season with the three-act play, *Letters To Lucerne*, given in the fall under the direction of Sponsor David C. Bryant. Thespian James Deadrack designed the set, with furnishings provided by generous parents. Thespian Betty Dillon directed two one-act plays given at a special school assembly, and later repeated at the Great Neck Service Men's Club. For the Christmas Season, the Dramatics Club staged the one-act play, *The Saints Return*. Troupe officers are: Rita Pochapin, president; Geraldine Westphal, vice-president; and Hazel Welton, secretary.—Hazel Welton, Secretary.

### Osage, Iowa

**T**HE Junior Class production of *The Importance of Being Earnest* in November marked the opening of the current dramatics season at the Osage High School (Troupe No. 411) under the direction of Miss Gwynette Finn. More than two hundred students participated in the production of an impressive pageant, *American Pageant*, staged on February 16 and 17 as a contribution to the High School Theatre For Victory Program. The pageant was adapted by Miss Finn from *As America Sang*, by Carleton Coons. The next major play of the season will be staged by the Senior Class in May. *Mrs. Miniver* has been chosen for this purpose.

### Brigham City, Utah

**M**AJOR plays given this season at the Box Elder High School (Thespian Troupe No. 404) were: *Stage Door*, *Cock Robin* and *Daisies On The Car Track*, with Mr. Clayton Cheney directing. Among the one-act plays presented during the season were *The Boor*, *Suppressed Desires*, and *Funeral Flowers For The Bride*. Thirty students made up the membership of the Troupe, with seventeen of them having been admitted during the season under Mr. Cheney's direction. The Troupe is the only dramatics club in school.

### Miller, S. Dak.

**T**HE current dramatics season at the Miller High School (Troupe No. 457) included two major plays, three one-act plays, and a pageant, *We Hold These Truths*, with Miss Dorothy C. Peck directing all productions and sponsoring Thespian activities. New members were added to Thespian Troupe after the production of the Senior Class play in April.

### Jerseyville, Ill.

**M**ISS EDYTH M. BREEN, dramatics director and Thespian Troupe sponsor at the Jersey Township High School (Troupe No. 62) reports a membership of forty-five students in her dramatics club for this season, with Thes-

pian forming an inner circle in the club. Weekly meetings are held by the club under Miss Breen's direction. The year's production schedule included one major play, three one-act plays, as well as other special programs. Approximately twenty new members will be admitted to Thespian membership in May, after the production of a Victory Program. A number of dramatics students of this school have appeared in radio plays and in performances given at various USO clubs.

### Madera, Calif.

**A** NUMBER of scenes from contemporary plays have been given this season by members of the drama class of the Madera Union High School (Thespian Troupe No. 462) under the direction of Miss Mary Scott, Troupe Sponsor. The dramatics club met monthly under Miss Scott's supervision. *Ever Since Eve* was staged as the major production for the spring semester. Among the one-acts presented were *All's Fair*, *The Fatal Quest*, *All On A Summer's Day*, and *Buddy Buys An Orchid*. The formal initiation of new Thespian members will be held early in May.

### Burlington, Wash.

**M**R. JAMES J. GILMORE reports the production of *Seven Keys To Baldpate* as one of the major plays presented this season at the Burlington High School (Thespian Troupe No. 333). Mr. Gilmore directed. Among the one-act plays presented were *Thanks Awfully*, *Inn of Return*, and *All the World Agin Her*. Thespians are the only organized dramatics group in school. A group of ten new members qualified for Thespian membership this spring.

### El Dorado, Ark.

**U**NDER the leadership of Mrs. Newkie Bick-erstaff new interest in dramatics has been

THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN



created this season at the El Dorado High School (Troupe No. 42). Mrs. Bickerstaff reports a membership of over eighty students in her Junior and Senior Dramatics Clubs with sixteen members as Thespians. The clubs hold weekly meetings. The season has included the production of the three-act play, *Plane Crazy*, and a number of one-acts, including *Sparkin'*, *The Last Boat*, *Mr. Togo and His Friends*, *Antic Spring*, *Junket For The Junkman*, *It Pays To Be A Poggle*, *Make Room For Rodney*, *Girls Must Talk*, and *Pearls*. Special programs for the year have included the patriotic pageant, *Fun To Be Free*, and *Memories of 1918*. Among the radio plays presented were *The Man Who Came To Fight*, and *Wheels*. New Thespians will be added to the troupe at a special ceremony scheduled for May 24, with Mrs. Bickerstaff directing.

#### Mullens, W. Va.

THE SPIANS of Troupe No. 197 have been responsible for the make-up for all major plays given this year at the Mullens High School, with Mrs. Carroll S. Slick as troupe sponsor. Thespians have also provided advice for all school productions, staged several patriotic plays within the school, and prepared special programs for the Rotary Club and the Women's Club. The spring semester activities began with the Junior Class play, *Huckleberry Finn*, on February 18. This was followed by the Senior Class play, *Don't Take My Penny*, on April 15. This spring a program of four one-act plays was also presented. The next major dramatic event on the calendar will be the Minstrel Show scheduled for April 28 and sponsored by the Glee Clubs.

#### Benton Harbor, Mich.

TWO major productions, *The Very Light Brigade* and *A Connecticut Yankee*, were given this season at the Benton Harbor High School (Troupe No. 455), with Miss Margaret L. Meyn as sponsor. The season also included two one-act plays, *The Happy Journey* and *Christmas Destiny*, the operetta, *Cynthia's Strategy*, and the *Delphinian Follies*. Thespians have sponsored a number of projects and have made several contributions to the school and community war effort. Among these were the Scrap Metal and Key Drives. Miss Meyn reports that dramatics has attained new levels in interest and accomplishments in her school this season.

#### Brownsville, Pa.

A BUSY and highly diversified program in dramatics was enjoyed this season by students of the Brownsville High School (Troupe No. 187) under the aggressive leadership of Miss Jean A. Donahay. The first full-length play of the year, *Strange Bequest*, was produced by the Dramatics Club on December 9. Late in February Thespians followed with a production of *Suspense*. Late in April the Senior Class will give their play. The season will close with a fourth major play written by President Ray Peters of Troupe 187. This last-mentioned play will be presented as an invitational program for students, patrons, and friends of the school. This will be the third production of its kind given this season, with students receiving valuable experience in acting and at the same time creating wide interest in dramatics in the school and community.

Thespians and members of the Dramatics Club have shared honors during the season in the production of one-act plays. Among the one-acts given were *Afraid Of The Dark*, *Of All Things*, *A Wedding*, *Land Of The Free*, *Christmas Gift*, *In The Suds*, *Even Exchange*, *Darkest Night*, *Bedside Manner*, and *Shelby and Son*. In addition to the regular activities, the dramatics groups of the school have presented programs for numerous church groups, civic clubs, and other organizations in the community. Thespians also had time to refinish a stage set, repair stage furniture, make costumes for formal initiations, and prepare honor rolls and service flags for Alumni members now in the armed forces.—Phyllis Baer, Secretary.

## High School Dramatics in the Victory Corps

(Continued from page 2)

tion, Cincinnati, Ohio, indicating that you wish to have your high school dramatics department, club, or classes, enrolled in the Theatre For Victory Program. Mention at least one major dramatic project sponsored as a contribution to the war effort since Pearl Harbor Day. An enrollment card and further particulars may be obtained from the National Thespian Society.

II. The Committee on War Activities of the American Educational Theatre Association was created in December, 1941, to organize the dramatic production and writing facilities of the schools and colleges of the Association for contribution toward winning the war and the peace. A principal function has been to serve as a coordinating agency with government war agencies, and with the war activities of other theatre organizations. The AETA News, the official publication received by all members, gives first place in each issue to publication of information and suggestions from the Committee on War Activities, and reports of the war activities of members. The writing and distribution of scripts for the war has been stressed. The Office of War Information now has in operation a clearing house of script information and materials, including script catalogues and materials for the writing of scripts. The Committee on War Activities has set up a classified mailing-list of AETA members with the Office of War Information for such materials. (See Bibliography.) Ernest Bavely, for coordination of the National Thespian and the AETA programs, is now serving as Chairman of the Secondary School Division of the AETA Committee on War Activities; inquiries concerning secondary school war activities in AETA should be addressed to him.

Every secondary school teacher or director of dramatics should belong to the American Educational Theatre Association for most effective participation in the war activities and services. Membership annual dues are \$2.50. Communicate with John Hulburt, Executive Secretary, Allegheny College, Meadville, Pennsylvania.

(Note: Both the National Thespian Society and the American Educational Theatre Association are represented on the Amateur Theatre War Council. See Section 2 under "General Background.")

### Bibliography and other Resources

I. Outline of script services of government agencies, prepared by School and College Services, Office of War Information. For any items listed, or other inquiry concerning scripts or material for scripts, write to Alan Schneider, School and College Services, Office of War Information.

#### Office of Civilian Defense:

Distributes Script Catalogue  
Distributes radio and stage scripts

#### Office of Education Radio Script Exchange:

Distributes Radio Scripts for Victory  
Distributes Radio Transcriptions for Victory  
Distributes radio (and a few stage) scripts

#### Treasury Department:

Distributes A Handbook of War Savings School Assembly Programs  
Distributes radio and stage scripts

#### Writers' War Board (With Bureau of Publications, OWI):

Distributes Plays, Pageants and Radio Programs catalogue  
Distributes radio and stage scripts

#### Office of War Information (Division of Educational Service):

1. Serves as a clearing house of information on war scripts, on government agencies distributing script material, etc.
2. Distributes source list for dramatic materials on the war. (Now in process of revision.)
3. Distributes background materials for writers of wartime scripts.
  - a. File of Radio Background Material
 

|                    |                                 |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Food               | Careless Talk                   |
| Salvage            | Mileage Rationing               |
| The United Nations | Rumors                          |
| Women in the War   | Our Enemies: The Nazis          |
| Our Merchant Fleet | Fuel Conservation               |
| The Cost of Living | Share the Meat                  |
| Transportation     | Right Workers in the Right Jobs |
  - b. General OWI pamphlets
    - The Thousand Million—our allies; their lands and people
    - Tale of a City—the story of a conquered Warsaw
    - Divide and Conquer—the Axis technique of conquest
    - The Unconquered People—underground revolt in Europe
    - Toward New Horizons—war aims of the United Nations
    - Negroes and the War—the contribution of the Negro to the war.
  - c. Background materials from other agencies:
    - Office of Civilian Defense
    - War Production Board
    - Department of Agriculture
    - Treasury Department.
4. Distributes When Radio Writes for War (Useful to writers of stage scripts)
5. Answers requests for Office of Civilian Defense catalogue, Writers' War Board Catalogue, Radio Script Exchange catalogues, and Treasury handbook
6. Distributes OWI posters and government pamphlet material for display in theatre lobbies, etc.
7. Carries out special projects, such as the distribution of Food script for Department of Agriculture. (In April.)

II. A list of plays and pageants, recommended for production as contributions to the High School Theatre For Victory Program. Obtained free of charge from the National Thespian Society, College Hill Station, Cincinnati, Ohio. Enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. (Note: A Wartime Manual For High School Dramatics Directors will be available from the National Thespian Society after August 15, 1943. The price is \$1.00.)

III. America Speaking, ed. Olga Perschbacher and Dorothy Wilde, Scott, Foresman and Co., 1943. An anthology of expressions of fundamental American traditions from the literature of America, poetry and prose. An extremely useful source book for writing of pageants, and other dramatic writing for the war.

Playwrights Present Problems in Everyday Life, a book of excerpts from well-known dramas, ed. Giles and Cadigan, Harpers, 1942. Twenty-one scenes from plays and four complete radio scripts selected to inspire discussion of current problems, including the war.

The Patriotic Anthology, ed. Carl Van Doren, Doubleday, 1941. Selections from Columbus to Mrs. Borden Harriman.

Thus Be It Ever, ed. Clara A. Molendyle and Capt. Benjamin C. Edwards, Harpers, 1942. An anthology, mostly modern, for our "heritage of freedom."

IV. The Treasury Star Parade, ed. William A. Bacher, Farrar and Rinehart, 1942. Twenty-seven radio plays selected from the Treasury Star Parade program.

The Free Company Presents, ed. James Boyd, Dodd, Mead & Co., 1941. Radio plays on the meaning of America, from the Free Company series.

These two books represent some of the best dramatic writing that has come out of the war. High school students will not write like them, but they will be about as stimulating reading for dramatic activity for the war as can be found.

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### Snohomish, Wash.

DRAMATICS activities for the spring term at the Snohomish High School (Troupe No. 463) began with the Thespian production of *I'm In The Army Now* on February 4, with Miss Ruth Onerheim directing. The second major production for this spring will be presented by the Senior Class late in April, with Miss Onerheim also directing. Activities for this spring also include a trip to the Showboat Theatre at the University of Washington, and a formal initiation of new Thespian members to be held before the entire student body.

### Middletown, N. Y.

CLIMAXING six months of industrious activities, Troupe No. 74 of the Middletown High School held an impressive formal initiation late in February, with twelve new members taking the Thespian pledge. The new members gave recitations and readings after the candlelight ceremony was concluded under the direction of Mr. Miles McLain, Troupe Sponsor. Major plays for this season were *Ever Since Eve* given on November 19 and 20, and an evening of one-act plays consisting of *Remember Pearl Harbor*, *Messenger From Wake Island*, and *Southern Beauty Sustained*, given early this spring. Contributions have been made to the Stage Door Canteen Fund and to the American Red Cross. Many members of Troupe No. 74 are now in the armed forces.

### Rocky River, Ohio

THE contribution of \$25.00 to the Stage Door Canteen Fund and the enrollment of Thespian Troupe No. 65 of Rocky River High School in the HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE FOR VICTORY PROGRAM marked the beginning of this school's effort toward the war. On February 16th, the annual FATHER'S NIGHT PROGRAM was held in the high school auditorium, and varied talent was displayed. The program opened with the Junior High Dramatic Club giving a short play, *Junior Answers An Ad.* The National Thespians presented Stephen Vincent Benet's popular one-act play, *The Devil and Daniel Webster*. At this point in the program the high school's A Cappella Choir offered several musical numbers. *United We Stand*, a patriotic pageant, written and produced entirely by the students of the high school, concluded the program. This marked the third performance of *United We Stand*, as it was given twice for the student body in January. Under the direction of Miss Edith A. White, Troupe Sponsor, plans are being made for the Senior Class play which will be given this spring.—Paul A. Robinson, Secretary.

### Burley, Idaho

MEMBERS of Thespian Troupe No. 111 have made this a service year as their part in the war effort. Contributions have been made to the community and Red Cross work,

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and several patriotic programs have been sponsored, with Sponsor Jean E. Mizer directing all activities. *The Late Christopher Bean* was staged by the Senior Class on December 11, with Thespians serving on the production staff. Thespians staged two performances of the second major play of the season, *Alias, The Butler*, on March 25 and 26. Several students have been admitted to Thespian membership this season under Miss Mizer's direction.

### Thompson Falls, Mont.

DON'T TAKE MY PENNY was presented this spring at the Thompson Falls High School (Thespian Troupe No. 270), with Miss Ella May Wessel directing the production. The spring term also included the production of the patriotic playlet, *Time Is Short*. Thespians are the only organized dramatics group in school this season, with Miss Wessel acting as sponsor.

### Orrville, Ohio

CLASS-PRODUCED plays this season at the Orrville High School (Troupe No. 387) were *Young April* and *Ever Since Eve*, both staged under the direction of Miss Virginia Carson, Troupe Sponsor. The season also included the one-act plays, *Diet Begins Tomorrow* and *The Bishop's Candlesticks*. Thespians are the only organized dramatics group in school. Ten new members will be admitted to Thespian membership early in May under Miss Carson's direction.



Scene from the Senior Class play, *Arms and the Man*, by G. B. Shaw, at the Ann Arbor, Mich., High School. Directed by Lloyd E. Roberts.



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### PLYMOUTH DRAMA FESTIVAL

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#### Watertown, S. Dak.

THE production of three one-act plays, *The Trysting Place*, *The Faces of Deke*, and *The Devil and Daniel Webster*, represents the latest dramatics effort at the Watertown High School (Thespian Troupe No. 330). The first two were directed by Miss Meryts Olsen, and the third by Miss Florence M. Bruhn, Troupe Sponsor. The outstanding production of the season was *Arsenic and Old Lace*, staged by the Senior Class, with Miss Bruhn directing. Much of the work associated with the successful presentation of this play was done by students themselves. This spring the dramatics program will come to a climax with the initiation of a large number of students as members of Troupe No. 330. Miss Bruhn reports that credit is due Mary Ann Miller, troupe presi-

dent, for the success enjoyed by the dramatics program this season.

#### Fayetteville, N. Y.

THE current dramatics season at the Fayetteville High School (Troupe No. 98) will close with the production of the new comedy, *Best Foot Forward*, late in May, with Miss Jeanne Sullivan directing. This play will be presented as a contribution to the High School Theatre For Victory Program. The other major play of this season, *Our Town*, proved highly successful. Among the one-acts given during the year were *The Flattering Word*, *Rehearsal*, *I Go But I Shall Return*, and *Where The Cross Is Made*. Miss Sullivan reports that interest in dramatics is widespread in her school. The formal initiation of new members will be held this spring.

#### Charleston, W. Va.

A CROWDED auditorium of playgoers witnessed the performance of *Pure As The Driven Snow* at the Stonewall Jackson High School on February 26. The play was presented by members of Thespian Troupe No. 121 with Mrs. Teresa White directing. The cast and director were praised for a production that was extremely well done and enjoyed by all.

#### Tucson, Ariz.

CONTRIBUTIONS by the Dramatics Department to the war effort at the Tucson High School (Troupe No. 425) began with a state-wide broadcast of *Listen To The People*, last spring over Station KTUC. A second broadcast of an original play followed later in the same month. On October 13 a third broadcast was given, this also being an original program. In November and February, Thespians gave two very beautiful patriotic assemblies with Thespian Bill Fund writing the continuity for both programs. Thespians have also assisted in the preparation of programs given for servicemen at the local air bases. Plans are now under consideration to take the Senior Class play to the air bases at Phoenix, Ariz. Miss Lillian Cavett, director of dramatics and troupe sponsor, reports wide interest in dramatics activities in behalf of the war by her department.

#### Fort Stockton, Texas

ALMOST SUMMER and *Don't Take My Penny* were the two full-length plays given this season at the Fort Stockton High School (Troupe No. 33), with Miss Ranell Chaney directing. The season also included the one-act plays, *Star-Light*, *If Men Played Cards As Women Do*, *Why The Chimes Rang*, and *Another Voice*. Miss Chaney reports that the season has been unusually successful. A group of ten students will be admitted to Thespian membership early in May.



Cast for *Good Gracious Grandma* as staged by the Junior Class at the Tonganoxie, Kansas, High School. Directed by Mrs. Thelma Haverty.



# ★ Contributions to the Stage Door Canteen Fund ★

Amount Previously Reported.....\$1,609.77

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| Barrymore Troupe No. 455, Benton Harbor (Mich.) High School.<br><i>Margaret L. Meyn, Sponsor</i> .....                 | 3.00   |
| Troupe No. 309, J. Sterling Morton High School, Cicero, Ill.<br><i>Helen G. Todd, Sponsor</i> .....                    | 5.00   |
| Troupe No. 539, Warwood High School, Wheeling, W. Va.<br><i>Virginia Perryman, Sponsor</i> .....                       | 2.50   |
| Troupe No. 316, Van (West Va.) High School. <i>Mellrose Higginbotham, Sponsor</i> ..                                   | 2.00   |
| Troupe No. 59, Danville (Ill.) High School. <i>Mary A. Miller, Sponsor</i> .....                                       | 35.00  |
| Troupe No. 359, Lyons High School, Clinton, Iowa. <i>Mrs. Mason Lowe, Sponsor</i> ...                                  | 20.00  |
| Troupe No. 42, El Dorado (Ark.) High School. <i>Mrs. Newkie Bickerstaff, Sponsor</i> ..                                | 30.00  |
| Troupe No. 65, Rocky River (Ohio) High School. <i>Edith A. White, Sponsor</i> .....                                    | 25.00  |
| Dramatics Club, Elkhart (Ind.) High School. <i>Joe Rench, President</i> .....  | 10.00  |
| Troupe No. 180, Tuscola (Ill.) High School. <i>Miss Thelma Grumbes, Sponsor</i> .....                                  | 5.00   |
| Troupe No. 420, Willis High School, Delaware, Ohio. <i>Miss Josephine Wible, Sponsor</i>                               | 15.00  |
| Troupe No. 257, Hazleton (Pa.) Senior High School. <i>Miss Marion V. Brown, Sponsor</i>                                | 300.00 |
| Troupe No. 490, David Starr Jordan High School, Long Beach, Calif.<br><i>Mr. Paul A. Camp, Sponsor</i> .....           | 20.00  |
| Troupe No. 173, Central High School, Bellevue, O. <i>Miss Esther Schachtele, Sponsor</i> ..                            | 5.00   |
| Dramatics Club, Brownsville, Pa., High School. <i>Jean A. Donahey, Sponsor</i> .....                                   | 5.00   |
| Troupe No. 531, Clarksville (Ark.) High School. <i>Lillian Hunt, Sponsor</i> .....                                     | 5.00   |
| Troupe No. 167, Doylestown (Ohio) High School. <i>Bernice Althaus, Sponsor</i> .....                                   | 42.00  |
| Troupe No. 97, Herkimer, N. Y., High School. <i>Ralph K. Alger, Sponsor</i> .....                                      | 50.00  |
| Troupe No. 187, Brownsville, Pa., High School. <i>Jean A. Donahey, Sponsor</i> .....                                   | 5.00   |
| Troupe No. 226, Washington Irving High School, Clarksburg, W. Va.<br><i>Lillie Mae Bauer, Sponsor</i> .....            | 45.00  |
| Troupe No. 84, Princeton, W. Va., High School. <i>Irene R. Norris, Sponsor</i> .....                                   | 2.20   |
| Troupe No. 535, Carver High School, Winston Salem, N. C.<br><i>Mrs. G. H. Fitch, Sponsor</i> .....                     | 5.00   |
| Troupe No. 511, St. John's Academy, Wichita, Kans. <i>Sister M. Ambrosine, Sponsor</i>                                 | 5.00   |
| Masquers Club and Thespian Troupe 423, Watertown, Conn., High School.<br><i>Miss Isabella V. Rowell, Sponsor</i> ..... | 40.00  |
| Troupe No. 137, Bramwell, W. Va., High School. <i>Shirley Foster, Sponsor</i> .....                                    | 2.25   |
| Troupe No. 127, Salem, N. J., High School. <i>Marie L. Oehrle, Sponsor</i> .....                                       | 10.00  |
| Troupe No. 161, Urbana, Ill., High School. <i>Mrs. Ethel Hamilton, Sponsor</i> .....                                   | 60.00  |
| Troupe No. 515, East Aurora, N. Y., High School.....   | 42.40  |
| Troupe No. 230, Fort Hill High School, Cumberland, Md.<br><i>Geraldine Pritchard, Sponsor</i> .....                    | 62.00  |
| Troupe No. 549, Payson, Utah, High School. <i>Arch Williams, Sponsor</i> .....   | 5.00   |
| Wig and Paint Dramatics Club, Kendallville, Ind., High School.<br><i>Mrs. Phil Appleman, Club Treasurer</i> .....      | 20.00  |
| Troupe No. 212, Sherman High School, Seth, W. Va. <i>Mary W. Tamplin, Sponsor</i> ..                                   | 10.00  |
| Troupe No. 372, Wellsburg, W. Va., High School. <i>Iva G. Brashear, Sponsor</i> .....                                  | 16.00  |
| Troupe No. 528, Classical High School, Providence, R. I.<br><i>Mrs. Emilie S. Piché, Sponsor</i> .....                 | 10.00  |
| Troupe No. 352, Robbinsdale, Minn., High School. <i>Bess V. Sinnott, Sponsor</i> .....                                 | 5.00   |
| Troupe No. 272, Hibbing, Minn., High School. <i>Don Woods, Sponsor</i> .....   | 10.00  |
| Troupe No. 436, Rawlins, Wyo., High School. <i>Caecilie D. Pieper, Sponsor</i> .....                                   | 5.00   |
| Paint and Patch Club, Coatesville, Pa., High School. <i>Mildred Hyman, Club President</i>                              | 36.98  |
| Thespian Troupe 62, Jersey Twp. High School, Jerseyville, Ill.<br><i>Edyth M. Breen, Sponsor</i> .....                 | 20.00  |
| Thespian Troupe 439, McCray-Dewey Twp. High School, Troy, Ill.<br><i>Ann Herron, Sponsor</i> .....                     | 5.00   |
| Thespian Troupe 145, Fassifern School for Girls, Hendersonville, N. C.<br><i>Gene Bryson, Sponsor</i> .....            | 20.00  |
| Thespian Troupe No. 236, Cairo, Ill., High School. <i>Mary E. Fitts, Sponsor</i> .....                                 | 5.75   |
| Thespian Troupe No. 312, Ripley, W. Va., High School.<br><i>Elizabeth McGrew and Ruth Lee Miller, Sponsors</i> .....   | 50.00  |
| Thespian Troupe No. 22, Deer Lodge, Mont., High School. <i>Edith B. Hamilton, Sponsor</i>                              | 10.00  |
| Thespian Troupe No. 368, Geneva, Ohio, High School. <i>Dorothy V. Diles, Sponsor</i> ...                               | 3.00   |
| Thespian Troupe No. 473, Celina, Ohio, High School. <i>Hazel Fashbaugh, Sponsor</i> ....                               | 5.00   |
| Thespian Troupe No. 279, Spencer, W. Va., High School.<br><i>Emma Neal Bogges, Sponsor</i> .....                       | 60.00  |
| Thespian Troupe No. 424, Edmonds, Wash., High School. <i>Mrs. Grace Bliss, Sponsor</i>                                 | 10.00  |
| Thespian Troupe No. 360, Plentywood, Mont., High School.<br><i>E. Winifred, Opgrande, Sponsor</i> .....                | 65.00  |
| Thespian Troupe No. 550, Chatfield, Minn., High School. <i>Ida M. Erstad, Sponsor</i> ...                              | 5.00   |
| Thespian Troupe No. 432, Dobyns-Bennett High School, Kingsport, Tenn.<br><i>Nancy C. Wylie, Sponsor</i> .....          | 25.62  |
| Thespian Troupe No. 85, Mission, Texas, High School. <i>Opal Wallace, Sponsor</i>                                      | 5.00   |

Total contributions as of April 15, 1943.....\$2,875.07

## The High School Theatre Helps Win the War!

WENATCHEE HIGH SCHOOL  
WENATCHEE, WASHINGTON

MR. ERNEST BAVELY, Secretary-Treasurer  
The National Thespian Society  
Cincinnati, Ohio

Dear Mr. Bavely:

Enclosed is a check for \$110.17 which represents the contribution of Troupe 469 to the Stage Door Canteen Fund.

We were handicapped in our fall program by a five weeks' vacation while the apples were being harvested, so it was already November before we received the call for this contribution. As our fall play had to be begun at that time and the entire proceeds were already promised to the senior class, the Thespians turned the problem over to my four classes in beginning dramatics. Each class worked up a one-act play in two weeks of class work and the four were presented, with the co-operation of the administration, at a pay assembly in the afternoon as well as for the public in the evening of Thanksgiving Tuesday. As a special concession, because of the fact that this was totally for the benefit of men in the service, our student council waived its right to a percentage of the proceeds. We are therefore very happy to be able to send our check for the entire amount of the net.

We are also happy that this project gave opportunity for so many of our beginning students to earn Thespian points.

Very truly yours,

MISS GRACE GORTON,  
Sponsor, Troupe 469.

### Newton, Kan.

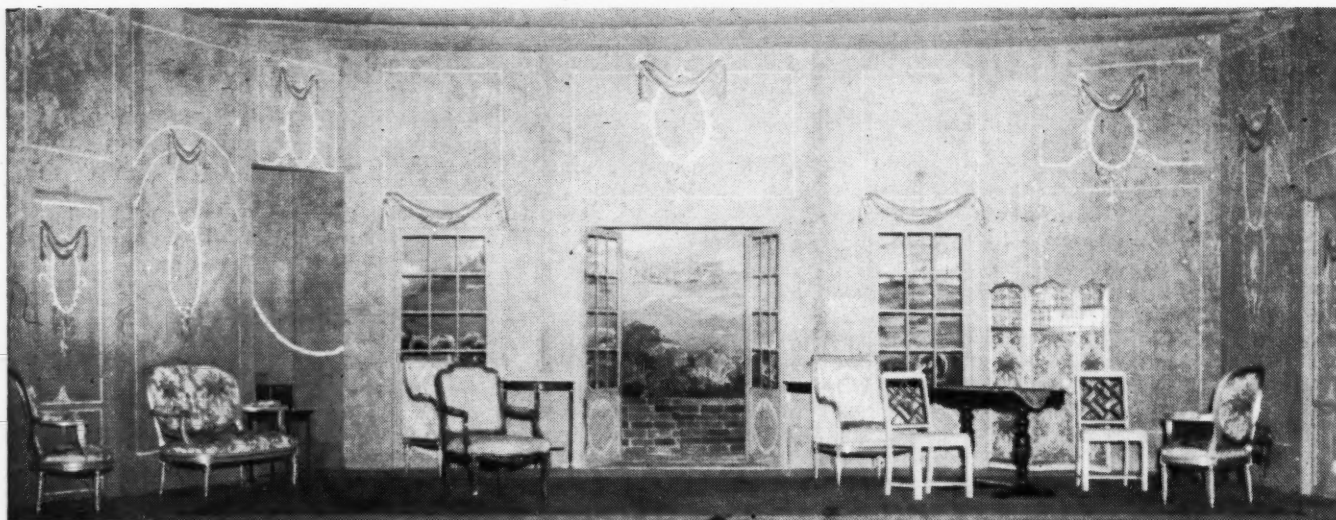
WITH Mr. A. E. Bigler as director and Thespian sponsor, dramatics students have enjoyed a lively and worth while program this season at the Newton High School (Thespian Troupe No. 47). The Dramatics Department production of *Tish* on December 20 opened the season. On February 19, the Junior Class presented *It Happened Next Tuesday*. The third major production, *Brother Goose*, was presented by the Senior Class on April 16. Much time has been given this year to the production of original one-act plays and radio skits. Among these were the scripts and parodies used in the musical show, *Voice For Victory*, presented by the Music Department on April 2. Thespians built and supervised the set and lighting for this show. The Dramatics Department has contributed to several patriotic causes sponsored by the school.—Theresa McCann, Secretary.

### Miami, Fla.

NINE students were admitted to Thespian membership in Troupe No. 8 of the Miami Edison High School early in March, with Mrs. Lucile Cunningham as Troupe Sponsor. Major productions this season were *Ever Since Eve*, *Antigone*, and scenes from several of Shakespeare's plays. Also given this season were a number of one-act plays, including *Georgie-Porgie*, *Too Many Mary's*, *Elmer, Sweet 16*, and *They Burned The Books*. The Mike and Masque Radio Club has been active, with activities centering around the C. B. S. School of the Air Series.

### Wichita, Kan.

LETTERS TO LUCERNE will be given this spring at the St. John's Academy (Troupe No. 511) with Sister M. Ambrosine directing. The current season has also included the production of *Girls of the U. S. A.*, *Powder Puff Minstrel*, *Round the Clock With Claire*, and *Mimi Lights the Candle*. The Dramatics Club has met monthly with the Drama Class this season. Sister Ambrosine will hold the formal initiation of her new Thespian soon after the production of *Letters To Lucerne* in May.



Set for *Letters to Lucerne* as designed by James Dedrick. A production of Thespian Troupe No. 201 at the Great Neck, N. Y., High School. Directed by Mr. David C. Bryant.

#### Dallas, Texas

A TOTAL of eighteen new members have been added to the membership of Thespian Troupe No. 338 of the W. H. Adamson High School during the current season. Miss Wilhelmina G. Hedde is the Troupe Sponsor. Four one-act plays, *Buddy*, *The Enchanted Circle*, *A Double Affair*, and *The Ghost Hunters*, were given by Thespians as part of the play production program for the year. Thespians also participated in the city-wide play contest held on April 15.—Marianne Craig, Secretary.

#### Lumberport, W. Va.

SEEING DOUBLE is one of the major plays given this season at the Lumberport High School (Thespian Troupe No. 416), with Miss Catharine Tiano directing. The season has also included the production of a spring revue and the patriotic one-act play, *Left Jab*. About a dozen new members were added to the troupe early in April under Miss Tiano's direction. The regular dramatics club numbering thirty-six students has met twice a month this year.

#### East Akron, Ohio

PROF. E. TURNER STUMP of the Speech Department of Kent State University was guest speaker at an impressive Thespian initiation ceremony held at the Springfield Township High School on April 16, with Mrs. Frances A. Horton in charge of activities. A large group of students were admitted to membership in Troupe No. 104 of this school. Major productions for this year have included *Out Of The Frying Pan*, produced on October 13, and *Ever Since Eve*, given on March 27. A production of *Smilin' Through* is under consideration for May. The season has also included the production of several one-act plays and a radio production of "History of the Flag." Mrs. Horton's interest in dramatics has resulted in renewed enthusiasm for speech and dramatics throughout the entire student body. Mr. Roger Wilkin is in charge of stagecraft and assists Mrs. Horton in the production of the school plays.

#### Thomasville, Ga.

MRS. BROOKS WOOTEN, director of dramatics and Troupe Sponsor at the Thomasville High School (Troupe No. 481), reports the production of *The Ghost In The Belfry* as the first major play of the current season at her school. A second full-length play, probably *The Very Light Brigade*, will be staged the first week in June. The season has also included several one-act plays and participation in the district one-act play contest. Several students

will be admitted to Thespian membership this spring.

#### Cleveland, Tenn.

DRAMATICS interest this spring at the Bradley High School (Troupe No. 20) has centered largely around the production of *You Can't Take It With You*, under the direction of Miss Josephine Chance. The spring term has also included the production of the one-act play, *The Wedding*. About a dozen students are expected to qualify for Thespian membership this spring.

#### Michigan City, Ind.

THE SOUL OF ANN RUTLEDGE was presented as the Senior Class play on April 9 at the Isaac C. Elston High School (Thespian Troupe No. 91), with Miss Mellie Luck directing. On March 15 a program on one-act plays consisting of *Thursday Evening Rehearsal*, and *Fortune Is A Cowboy*, was presented to the Drama Department and later to the Women's Study Club. Plans were also considered to give these plays to the men stationed in the local Naval Armory. A number of alumni members of Thespian Troupe No. 91 are functioning as a dramatic organization. Miss Luck reports the election of Karl Ziegler as Best Thespian for this season.

#### Willoughby, Ohio

TWO major productions, *You Can't Take It With You* and *Out Of The Frying Pan*, have been given so far this season at the Willoughby Union High School, with Miss Marijo Ringo as director and Thespian Troupe Sponsor. A third major production is under consideration for this spring. More than fifty students have participated in the dramatics club program during this season, with meetings held weekly. Early in April nine students were admitted to Thespian membership in Troupe No. 220 which Miss Ringo sponsors.

#### Oelwein, Iowa

SPONSOR HORACE HOOVER of Troupe No. 194 at the Oelwein High School reports the production of *Ladies In Retirement* and *Claudia* as the two major productions of this season. Mr. Hoover also reports the production of the one-act plays, *The Happy Journey* and *Shall We Join The Ladies*, and a choral reading recital and an original musical comedy revue. About ten new members were admitted to Thespian membership this spring under Mr. Hoover's direction.

#### Leominster, Mass.

DIRECTOR JONE F. JOYCE of the Leominster High School reports a highly successful production of Farquhar's Restoration comedy, *The Beaux' Stratagem*, by the graduation class. "Appropriately disinfected and speeded up," writes Mr. Joyce, "it makes an ideal vehicle for high school players. We staged it informally, almost in the spirit of a gay joke in which the audience participated. It made ideal wartime entertainment, and, of course, along with it went the satisfaction of doing one of the great comedies of all times."

#### Pasco, Wash.

THE production of *Out Of The Frying Pan* and *And Came The Spring* have been reported by Miss Evelyn Botling who sponsors Thespian Troupe No. 271 at the Pasco High School. The current year has also included the one-act plays, *Message From Bataan*, *Lady Luck*, and *Utter Relaxation*. Weekly meetings have been held by Thespians this season with some thirty students being active.

#### Cleveland Heights, Ohio

THE sale of war bonds and stamps amounting to \$625.00 was realized as the result of a performance of *Night Must Fall* in March at the Cleveland Heights High School (Thespian Troupe No. 410). The play was performed during "Theatre Victory Week" with Mr. Edward R. Mitchell as director. One of Mr. Mitchell's objectives in presenting this play was to show the people of the community that the theatre can and is a vital weapon in time of war. The second major spring production, *Letters To Lucerne*, was presented in April. The season began in November, 1942, with the production of the popular comedy, *Charley's Aunt*. Besides these activities, members of the troupe and regular dramatics groups are taking an active part in the presentation of plays and other entertainment in behalf of the war program. The troupe is now on call for any organization which wishes to give propaganda plays. Dr. Dina Rees Evans has general supervision of the dramatics program.—Jerry Powell, Secretary.

#### Chatfield, Minn.

WITH thirteen members of the dramatics club as charter members, Thespian Troupe No. 550 was formally established at the Chatfield High School, on March 2, under the direction of Miss Ida Erstad. Charter members are: Marion Amundson, Claire Bennett, Elaine



Ellis, Joyce Grindland, LeRoy Haagenson, Jerome Halloran, George Haven, Jr., Ruth Hitchcock, Donna Mae Kohlmeier, Geraldine Leas, Tom Manahan, Joanne Thruber, and Irene Tuohy. The season's production schedule opened in October with three one-act plays. On November 24, *The Family Upstairs* was presented by the Junior Class. The play was well received by a large audience. A Victory Show was given by this group on March 23, with funds being given to the Red Cross and the Stage Door Canteen. The season will close with the Senior Class play, *June Mad*, in May, with Thespians playing the leading roles. Troupe officers are: LeRoy Haagenson and Marion Amundson, co-presidents; Joyce Grindland, secretary; and Ruth Hitchcock, treasurer.—*Joyce Grindland, Secretary.*

#### Lookout, W. Va.

**N**UTTALL HIGH SCHOOL THESPIANS have been very active this winter despite the fact that this is a rural high school and attendance at public affairs is very small. In celebration of National Drama Week, Troupe No. 140 sponsored an intra-school one-act play festival. Thespians assisted in staging the plays. *Brung In De Pris'ner*, *Not Quite Such A Goose*, *Merry Molly Malone*, and *Herbie And The Mumps* were presented, and an all-festival cast of six members chosen by critic judges.—*Bert Pannell, Jr., Secretary.*

#### Baton Rouge, La.

**D**RAMATICS at Baton Rouge High School (Thespian Troupe No. 504) was begun very successfully last fall with the presentation of a one-act play, *Little Darling*. More recently, *Home Sweet Home* was given. Thespians have been very busy working on radio programs which has aroused keen interest among the students. Four half-hour programs are presented each month over local stations, two over W45BR and two over WJBO. This provides experience for young Thespians who find radio work stimulating and exciting. Some of the radio productions were *Speak Of The Devil*, Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Bottle Imp*, and *Handsome Is by Helen Handford*. All the radio dramatizations are directed by students. Many Thespians are members of the Dramatics and Radio Club which encourage their members to become Thespians. Seventeen new members were admitted into Troupe No. 504 on March 31. The initiation ceremony was under the direction of sponsor Miss Alma Belle Womack. The officers are: Charlotte Painter, president; Garnet St. Dizier, vice-president; Millicent Jackson, secretary; J. W. Wright, treasurer, and Norman Schaeffer, clerk.

#### Ellenville, N. Y.

**T**ROUPE No. 235 of the Ellenville High School, with Miss Mary E. Brodbeck as sponsor, held an impressive initiation ceremony on January 10, with the Thespian pledge being administered to Harold Weinbroth, Stuart Schoonmaker, June Miller, Robert Hilliard, June Bradford, Martin Katcher, Howard Kass, Robert Baker, Irving Lazarowitz, and Edward Hart. Assisting Miss Brodbeck with the ceremony were Virginia Daioczok and Adele Gittleman. Activities for the spring term began with the production of the play, *Sham*, in the Little Theatre on March 16. This was followed with the production of *Peg O' My Heart*, a three-act play, on April 9. The troupe has contributed to the Stage Door Canteen Fund and soon will give a radio performance of *Time Is Short*. Members of the Little Theatre, including Thespians, plan to attend a performance of *The Eve of St. Mark* in New York some time in May.—*Adele Gittleman, Secretary.*

#### Covington, Ky.

**M**R. ROBERT R. CROSBY, dramatics director and Thespian troupe sponsor at the Holmes High School, reports the production of *What A Life* as the first major play of this

season for his Department. The second full-length play will be given on June 11 by the Senior Class. The year has also included the production of several one-act plays, including *The First Dress Suit*, *The Happy Journey*, *Two Crooks and a Lady*, and *Sparkin'*. A dramatics club which has numbered over seventy-five members this year met twice a month under Mr. Crosby's direction. The formal initiation of new Thespian members was held this spring.

#### Parkersburg, W. Va.

**A** BEAUTIFUL, formal initiation was held on February 1 on the stage of the Central High School, with Bettie Lowther, Susan Trout, Betty Wisenbaler and Robert J. Martin receiving the Thespian pledge. A banquet followed at the Wilmar Restaurant, where tables were attractively decorated in keeping with St. Valentine's Day. National Drama Week, early in February, was observed with the production of the play, *Uncle Tertius On The Home Front*. The mid-year Senior II play was *Night of January 16th*, given to a capacity crowd under the direction of Miss Edith W. Humphrey, Troupe Sponsor. The latest major production, *Are You Mr. Butterworth*, will be given late in April by members of Thespian Troupe No. 264, with Miss Humphrey directing. A "Thespian Playshop Club" was established this season, with membership open to Thespians and certain talented senior students.—*Muriel Gifford, Secretary.*

#### Superior, Wis.

**M**R. D. A. LIERCKE, head of the Speech Department at the Central High School, reports the production of two one-act plays, *Antic Spring*, and *Curse You, Jack Dalton*, both being the products of student initiative. Performances of these plays were also given at Camp Pattison for the entertainment of about one hundred and fifty men. *Heaven Can Wait* was given on March 19 as the Senior Class play. Dramatics students attended performances of *Charley's Aunt* and *Abie's Irish Rose*, staged by play production groups in Superior, as part of their activities program for the year.

#### Boulder, Colo.

**T**HE spring term for Thespians of the Boulder Senior High School (Troupe No. 60) opened with the production of *Outward Bound* on March 6. On April 9 followed the production of *The Milky Way*. The third major play, *Letters To Lucerne*, will be given on April 30. All major productions are directed by Mr. Ted Skinner. Perhaps the season's outstanding dramatics event was the premiere production of *The Fighting Littles*, a new play adapted from Booth Tarkington's novel of the same name, by Caroline Francke. Mr. Skinner directed the production, with Mr. Allan Downs as technical director. Mr. Skinner has also been active this season in soliciting from the high school within the State contributions for the Stage Door Canteen Fund.

#### Alliance, Ohio

**W**HAT A LIFE will be given on April 28 as the Senior Class play at the Alliance High School (Troupe No. 231), with Virginia Geddard acting as supervisor. The current year has included the production of a number of one-act plays, all student-directed, many of which have been presented before local groups and clubs. Directors of these one-act plays are Thespians and members of the Blue Domino Dramatics Club, each of whom is a member of a "group" responsible for the production of a one-act play by a certain date. Thespians have contributed plays for various patriotic appeals. A contribution to the Stage Door Canteen was made in December. The present year has resulted in increased interest for dramatics throughout the school.—*Robert Brugger, Secretary.*

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#### Payson, Utah

**T**IGER HOUSE was given on December 11 as the first full-length play of this season at the Payson High School. A second major dramatics event of the season was the patriotic pageant, *I Hear America Singing*, presented on February 29. Among the one-acts staged during the year were *Not Quite Such A Goose*, *The Pampered Darling*, and *The Little Darling*. The highlight of this season's activities was the installation of Thespian Troupe No. 549 at this school, with Mr. Arch Williams as Sponsor. At the present time Thespians are preparing a program of three one-act plays.—*Maxine Curtis, Secretary.*

#### Marysville, Kan.

**T**HREE full-length plays, *Mistakes At The Blakes*, *Night of January 16*, and *Young April*, were produced this season at the Marysville High School (Troupe No. 500), with Mrs. Mary Jane Davis directing. Among the one-act plays produced were *Vane Effort*, *Wienies on Wednesday*, *Three's A Crowd*, *Who Says Can't*, *Muley*, and *Finger of God*. Seventy students were active in the dramatics club, which met twice a month this year. A group of ten to fifteen students will qualify for Thespian membership this spring.

#### Daytona Beach, Fla.

**T**HE performance of *American Passport* by the Junior Class on February 12 opened the dramatics program for the spring semester at the Mainland High School (Troupe No. 35) with Mrs. Ruth A. Roach directing. The current year has also included the production of several one-act plays, including *Girls of the U. S. A.*, and *V-Home*. Four schools participated in an elaborate production of *The Nativity*, presented on December 6. The first informal initiation of new Thespians was held in March under Mrs. Roach's direction.

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### Pontiac, Mich.

"OUR production of *The Lovely Duckling*, given in December, was very successful in every respect," writes Mr. W. N. Viola, director of dramatics and Troupe Sponsor at the Pontiac Senior High School. "Three performances were given and people filled the auditorium to capacity on each occasion." The annual Play-crafters' Parents' Reception was held on January 20, with the production of a play, *The Reward*, by Mr. Viola, as the opening event of the evening. A second one-act play, *The Ugly Duckling*, followed. Much interest was shown in a series of slides of the plays, *320 College Avenue* and *The Lovely Duckling*. The reception closed with the third one-act play of the evening, *Not Quite Such A Goose*.

### Fair Oaks, Calif.

THIS season's dramatics program opened with two one-act plays, *Not Quite Such A Goose* and *Pig O' My Dreams*, at the San Juan High School (Thespians Troupe No. 289). Both plays were presented on November 10, with Miss Lillian Potter directing. The first major play of the year, *Going Places*, was given by the Junior Class on January 22, also under Miss Potter's direction. Preparations are now being made for the production of the Senior Class play this spring.—Eloise Price, Secretary.

### Sault Ste. Marie, Mich.

TWO performances of *June Mad*, October 22, 23, marked the opening of the present dramatics season for students of the Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., High School (Thespians Troupe 141), with Miss Agnes Solusberg directing. A patriotic pageant, *The United Nation*, was given on November 11, 12. Thespians took a leading part in the radio program given during National Education Week. The broadcast was given over Station WSOO. Plans for the spring production are now under consideration. Miss Solusberg directs all speech and dramatics activities.

### Caldwell, Idaho

A PAY assembly program sponsored by members of Troupe No. 409 of the Caldwell High School on October 19 netted the sum of \$48.00. The program included the one-act play, *Elmer*. With the return of Miss Annabel Anderson at the opening of the spring semester, a busy program in dramatics for the remainder of the season got under way.—Donald Souwen, Secretary.

### Rexburg, Idaho

AT least once a month this season members of Troupe 10 at the Madison High School have been presenting a patriotic skit or radio

### Correction

Marilyn Hatch, author of *Father's Vacation*, is a member of Thespians Troupe 108 of the Kenmore, New York, High School. A story about Marilyn in our March issue erroneously stated that she was a member of Troupe 528 of Providence, R. I. Miss Eve Strong sponsors Troupe 108.

drama before the student body. In February, Thespians took over the sponsorship of the school bond and stamp sale. At the time of this writing the school had sold bonds and stamps amounting to over \$1,500.00. Plans are now under way for the production of the spring plays. All speech and dramatics activities are under the direction of Mr. Preston R. Gledhill.

### Union, Oregon

LARGE flags of the United Nations and pictures of the leaders of each nation formed the background for the annual Thespians Parents Night held early in February at the Union High School (Thespians Troupe 412). Guests were seated at quartette tables, with a United Nations flag cluster as a center-piece. Favors were Defense Stamp corsages presented to all mothers, patrons and faculty women. Highlighting the evening program was the candlelight ceremony which resulted in three new members being added to the Troupe. As a climax to the program was an address given by Mrs. Fern Trull, Troupe Sponsor and dramatics director, on "Dramatics in Wartime." Mrs. Trull stressed the part being taken by the Troupe in the local defense effort. A short wartime play, *Mr. Tojo Thanks His Friends*, was read by Thespians as the concluding event. (Note: Mrs. Trull informs us that the decorations used for this program may be rented by any of our Troupes that may be planning events of a similar nature.)

### Tonganoxie, Kas.

THE present dramatics season at the Tonganoxie Rural High School (Troupe 379) opened with the production of *Good Gracious Grandma* on November 15, with the Junior Class as the production group. For the Christmas season Thespians present a pageant and the one-act play, *Christopher's Candles*. National Drama Week was observed in February with the performance of three one-act plays, *Almost Seventeen*, *The Catalogue*, and *Joseph Comes Home*. In March the Senior Class followed with a performance of the *Hobgoblin House*. Dramatics activities are under the direction of Mrs. Thelma Haverty.—Shirley Friemuth.

THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN



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Prepared by BLANDFORD JENNINGS

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| Kruckmeyer, Erna: "The High School Actor—His Heritage"                                  | Oct. 4  | "Training in Dramatics"  | Dec. 9           |
| "Backgrounds for the High School Actor"   | Nov. 2  | Vaudeville, American   | Oct. 4           |
| "She Speaks, Yet She Says Nothing"  | Dec. 6  | Victory Corps Program, the High School Theatre in  | Dec. 1 & Feb. 2  |
| "The Actor Asks, 'What Shall I Do?'"  | Feb. 4  | <i>Weavers, The</i>  | Mar. 7           |
| "The Art of Doing Nothing"  | Mar. 3  | "We Operate an Entertainment Service Bureau"   | Feb. 6           |
| "Speak the Speech"  | Apr. 12 | "What's New Among Books and Plays"—in each issue.  |                  |
| "The Curtain Rises"   | May 11  | <i>William Tell</i>  | Dec. 14          |
| Lensrud, John: <i>The Trail of the Lonesome Pine</i> , staging of                       | Nov. 16 | Winning Programs, 1941-42  | Oct. 26          |
| <i>Listen, Mr. Speaker</i> , staging of   | Mar. 14 | <i>Winterset</i>   | May 8            |
| <i>Lost Horizon</i> , staging of  | Apr. 11 | Wood, Donald: Staging of <i>Captain Applejack</i>  | Oct. 14          |
| Make-Up; see "Exercises in Make-Up"   |         | Wirt, Mildred: "Making Things Real"  | May 6            |
| Masters, Lillian: "Selling Dramatics in Our School and Community"                       | May 10  |  |                  |
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## What's New Among Books and Plays

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Review Staff: Blanford Jennings, Marion Stuart, Kari Natalie Reed, Elmer S. Crowley, Mary Ella Movee, Helen Movious, Rachel McCarty, Beulah B. Bayless, E. E. Strong

Reviews appearing in this department aim to help our readers keep up with recent books and plays. The opinions expressed are those of the reviewer only. Mention of a book or play in this department does not necessarily mean that such a publication is recommended by THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN.

Walter H. Baker Co., 178 Tremont Street, Boston, Mass.

*And There Were Voices*, an Abraham Lincoln play in three acts, by Robert Kaipe. 8 m., 5 w. Royalty, \$25. The events of this play concern the first years in Springfield, Illinois, in the life of Abraham Lincoln. The author succeeds well in portraying a Lincoln that is thoroughly human, sensitive, and aware of his weaknesses as well as his abilities. The court scenes in Act II show Lincoln's ability as a rising young lawyer and student of human nature. Act III is taken up with Lincoln's courtship of Mary Todd. Like so many other Lincoln plays, all the characters but Lincoln are definitely certain that he will some day "save his country." We quote: "Mr. Lincoln, you should marry someone who can set you straight on the path you're to follow and show you the great part you're going to play in the nation's history." On the whole, however, this Lincoln play has much in it that will appeal to amateur groups. Good material for advanced high school casts.—*Ernest Bavely*.

The Northwestern Press, 2200 Park Avenue, Minneapolis, Minn.

*Patriotic Programs*, a group of 14 skits, tableaux, musical programs, and speeches, by Abell and Agnes J. Anderson. No royalty quoted. For those who are unable to formulate an original patriotic program, such a collection as contained in this book might serve as a guide or be used verbatim. The short skits and musical programs contain a good deal of pantomime, some of which require costumes.—*Lotta June Merrill*.

*Patriotic Plays for School*, a collection of eight one act plays, by Helen Starr. No royalty. These eight plays cover the various patriotic endeavors of the school year: George Washington's birthday, Lincoln's birthday, citizenship, patriotism, history, and the present war. For the most part the dialogue is natural and would be interesting to under-classmen.—*Lotta June Merrill*.

Wetmore Declaration Bureau, 1631 South Paxton Street, Sioux City, Iowa.

*The Bird's Christmas Carol*, a play in one act, by Pauline Phelps. Dramatized from Kate Douglas Wiggin's famous story. 4 m. 7 w. Royalty, free. Crippled little Carol Bird gives a Christmas party for her poor friends, the Ruggles, but gloom overshadows the occasion when it is learned that Carol's life may be cut short due to her injury. Mrs. Ruggles' unexpected presence makes the Birds' yuletide the happiest of all. Especially good for either junior or senior high schools.—*Elmer S. Crowley*.

Art Craft Play Company, Box 488, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

*It's a Great Life*, a farce-comedy in three acts, by William D. Fisher. 5 m. 6 w. Royalty, \$12, including complete set of cast books. Repeat perf. \$2.50. This play is so full of complications that it almost defies review. It centers around the Wilson family and their many problems. Mary Wilson, the daughter, finds herself with three dates to the dance; one was arranged for by her well-meaning brother,

another by ambitious aunt Gertrude, and the third was her own choice. Mr. Wilson, practicing for the villain's role in the community play, does his part in solving the problem, as does brother Tommy impersonating a girl. All in all, it's a great life! Excellent fun for high school casts desiring a clever farce in the low royalty brackets.—*Elmer S. Crowley*.

Samuel French, 25 West 45th St., New York.

*Daisies on the Car Tracks*, a comedy in three acts, by Alladine Bell. 5 m. 4 w., 1 interior. Royalty; \$25. Directors looking for a light amusing domestic comedy will find *Daisies on the Car Tracks* is just the thing. Charlie Slater loves his family but he also loves peace. He thinks by getting his daughter married off and his son away to college that he will be able to relax and enjoy life, but it isn't as simple as that. Complications arise and it takes Aunt Maude to straighten things out. Kissing scenes may be objectionable to some groups although they are all in fun.—*Elmer S. Crowley*.

*Streetcar in the Attic*, a farce in three acts, by Louis Feldhaus. 6 w. 11 m. (7 of these have bit parts.) Extras. Royalty, \$25. This fast-moving play, filled with unexpected twists, is especially well suited to high school groups. Mr. Beaumont has been dead these seven years, but his many inventions (including a streetcar in the attic), are a source of concern to his young daughter, Pat, who wants to go to college and can't understand why the inventions aren't producing an income. When she sets out to prove that her father invented the scooter and the profits should rightly go to the family, she uncovers one ingenious device after another, sets the house in an uproar, involves the neighbors, the newspaper, and the law. Designed to keep the audience laughing and guessing until the last possible moment.—*Elmer S. Crowley*.

*Mrs. Uncle Sam*, a brisk, modern comedy in three acts, by Dorothy Connover. Several qualities found in this play make it a suitable choice for the high school stage. It is a timely play with direct bearing upon the war effort. The plot—the complete dethronement of a domineering husband by a vivacious and attractive sister-in-law—is one that will prove popular with audiences seeking wholesome entertainment. The fact that there are four male characters, and eight female parts will help solve the casting problems for many directors now that so many of our boys are leaving the classroom for the army camp. This is a wise choice for the director who wants a worth while non-royalty play—a play easy to produce and sure of a favorable audience reception.—*Ernest Bavely*.

*Dude Ranch*, by James Reach, with music by Geoffrey O'Hara. 6 m. 8 w. Royalty, \$10. A light, pleasant mixture of farce and melodrama, laid in a Western ranch house. The stock ingredients of the mortgaged ranch, the pseudo-cowboy with heart of gold, and the bad man are stirred up with the usual elements of mistaken identity and lovers' misunderstandings with enough freshness to make good entertainment of no special importance. There are some incidental songs that ought to send the audience home whistling.—*Blandford Jennings*.

## Change of Address

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*Keep 'Em Trying*, by Stanley Grayson. 4 m. 7 w. Royalty, \$10. This would be a good exercise in farce; it has all the sure-fire situations woven around a set of comic-strip characters. For good measure, there are two of nearly everything—two low-comedy mothers-in-law, two sweet young things, and even two heroes. Both of the latter, however, are played by the same actor—an excellent device, in view of the man-power shortage. Mistaken identity, characters hidden behind screens, and the inevitable superstitious Negro maid are among the tried and tested devices. The play cannot fail to get plenty of laughs, though the characterizations and situations are so stereotyped that nothing of permanent value can result.—*Blandford Jennings*.

*Deadlier Than the Male*, a comedy-drama in three acts, for an all-woman cast, by Pete Williams. 11 w. Royalty, \$10. All girl dramatics groups will find this play a good choice for their next production. With an up-to-the-minute theme, the play moves along to an exciting climax. The setting is Madame Maxine Luray's "salon de beauty" where several interesting characters reveal their problems and conflicts. The lead is taken by Susan Gardner, who succeeds in exposing Madame Maxine, and her accomplice, Anna Stoll, as espionage agents. There is no serious production problem. We recommend this as a timely play.—*E. E. Strong*.

*Hook, Line and Sinker!*, a farce in three acts, by Edith Loring. 4 m., 6 w. No royalty. This is the type of farce welcomed by those who want worthwhile non-royalty material. It is a play full of pure fun audiences thoroughly enjoy. The plot centers around Harvey Hoon's efforts to clear himself of one Angel Benedict, to whom he had been engaged at one time, and to prove to his present sweetheart that his love for her is genuine. There is laughter, action, and suspense in generous quantity. Most of the parts are for young people, a situation most welcomed by amateur groups. Very good material for high schools.—*Ernest Bavely*.

*Every Family Has One*, a comedy in three acts, by George Batson. 5 m., 7 w. Royalty, \$25. This play is one of the "regulation" type—simple and easily achieved characterizations, good dialogue, and amusing incidents, all of which tally to make a usable 3-act entertainment. The setting suggested is both attractive and elaborate, but nothing will be lost with less staging. It's the story of a mother's attempt to marry off her daughter to one of the Four Hundred; and there are the usual mis-ups that result when people try to be other than themselves.—*Mary Ella Bovee*.

Banner Play Bureau, Inc., San Francisco, Calif.

*The Dust Machine*, a burlesque in one act, by Frank Watron. 8 m. No royalty. After witnessing a convincing demonstration of a marvelous dust machine, the crafty king of an imaginary realm attempts to gain possession of the invention. The results are disastrous. Snappy modern dialogue and fantastic makeshift setting and costumes. Suitable for junior high school.—*Helen C. Movius*.



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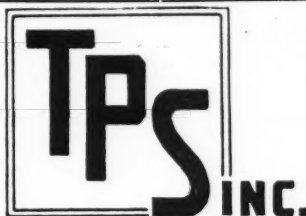
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